

**The fractured lives of German Bohemian children,
born 1933 - 40 in the area known as Sudetenland: A
Memory Study, Gablonz - Neugablonz**

Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Reading University

Institute of Education

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June 2015

Declaration

I confirm that this is my own work and the use of all material from other sources has been properly and fully acknowledged.

Signature of author:

Submission date: June 2015

Acknowledgements

It would not have been possible to bring this doctoral project to a satisfactory conclusion without the support and guidance from a wide-ranging network of people, unfortunately too numerous to be mentioned in full.

First and foremost I wish to express my gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Parsons whose patience and endurance in ensuring I consistently applied the required academic standards particularly in respect of the War Child Study was exemplary. For his help, encouragement and attention to detail I am deeply indebted to Professor emeritus Brian Richards whose advice was always greatly valued and sustained me in difficult times. Many thanks too to Professor D.B.G Heuser who took over as supervisor and coped very well with the task of guiding me during the later stages of the thesis. Many thanks also to Dr. Mary Stakelum and Professor Suzanne Graham of the Institute of Education for their help in times of desperation, as well as Tracey Pinchbeck and Helen Apted of the administrative staff, the Library staff, and generally everyone at Reading University whom I needed to contact at times. I could not have wished for a more helpful and congenial academic environment. The help of Dr. Lindsey Dodd was very much appreciated too, as she had travelled on a similar journey before me; her advice and comments were always very appropriate and welcome.

A big “thank you” goes to Professor Stefan Berger formerly of Manchester University, who drew my attention to the work of the European Science Foundation on national boundaries, national historiographies and ethnically overlapping regions in Europe. This ultimately became the inspiration for my research. I am also very grateful to Professor Rob Potter of Reading University who pointed me in the direction of Dr. Parson’s work on Evacuees and War Children under whose supervision I was subsequently able to start my own research, combining Political History with War-Child issues.

The interest and encouragement I received from academics at home and abroad is also gratefully acknowledged, many giving me valuable hints and opening unexpected windows on potentially new aspects in respect of my research. This applies particularly to Dr. Mai Maddisson whose work on the effects of displacement was a considerable influence on the angles I brought to that part of my study. A special “danke schön” goes to German and Czech researchers in the field who most generously supplied me with interesting and relevant material, Professors Arnold Suppan, Vienna and Claudia Klar, Siegen, Prof. Frank Hadler of the University of Leipzig, and Dr. Malte Thiessen, as well as advice from Dr. Volker Zimmermann, Dr. Adrian von Arburg, and latterly Dr. Jan Čapek of the University of Pardubice, Czech Republic. His interesting up-to-date work on Czech-German relations was also valuable within the context of this research. In respect of German War Child studies, my gratitude extends to

Professor Volker Ackermann, Sybille Dreher and Professors Barbara Stambolis and Insa Fooker whose input was greatly appreciated.

Above all, without the very able and efficient cooperation of sixteen ex-Gablonz German research participants from Kaufbeuren-Neugablonz and eight from Schwaebisch Gmuend as well as six Czech respondents from Jablonec, this project would not have been possible. It was a pleasure to work with all 30 volunteers in this study.

I am deeply indebted to all Czech participants in this study, who provided valuable testimonies. "Thank you" also to Borek Tichý of the Tourist and Cultural Office of Jablonec, who ably supported my research, also during visits to Jablonec and Jan Bitman, the local historian of the area researched, whose help was invaluable and finally Jan Kašpar, director of the Archive in Jablonec who could not have been more helpful. I wish to thank everybody in Kaufbeuren, Neugablonz and Jablonec whose interest in and active assistance with my research made me feel not only very welcome but enabled me to finish this study.

Finally, I wish to pay tribute to my late husband Geoffrey whose encouragement and wise counsel based on his immense knowledge of 20th century history and politics was always much appreciated.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis to all children, past and present, affected by war and displacement.

The fractured lives of German Bohemian children, born 1933 - 40 in the area known as Sudetenland: A Memory Study, Gablonz – Neugablonz

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An Interdisciplinary Study

Part 1, History and Politics: From the late 18th up to the removal (known as expulsion, transfer or odsun) of more than 3 million Czechoslovak Germans (Sudeten Germans) from 1945/46.

Part 2, The War Child Study (Social Research): How did a group of expellee children from northern Bohemia experience their history and how were their lives affected through being suddenly uprooted from their homeland and displaced.

Bohemia, Bohemian Kingdom, Habsburg Empire, Nation states Czechoslovakia, Czech Republic, Czechs, Bohemian Germans, Sudeten Germans, Jews, German expulsions, Sudeten German War Children, Sudeten expellees, Gablonz, Neugablonz, Czech-German studies, Nationalism, National stereotypes

Abstract

At the Paris Peace Conferences of 1918-1919, new states aspiring to be nation-states were created for 60 million people, but at the same time 25 million people found themselves as ethnic minorities. This change of the old order in Europe had a considerable impact on one such group, more than 3 million Bohemian German-speakers, later referred to as Sudeten Germans. After the demise of the Habsburg Empire In 1918, they became part of the new state of Czechoslovakia. In 1938, the Munich Agreement – prelude to the Second World War – integrated them into Hitler's Reich; in 1945-1946 they were expelled from the reconstituted state of Czechoslovakia.

At the centre of this War Child case study are German children from the Northern Bohemian town and district, formerly known as Gablonz an der Neisse, famous for exquisite glass art, now Jablonec nad Nisou in the Czech Republic. After their expulsion they found new homes in the post-war Federal Republic of Germany. In addition, testimonies have been drawn upon of some Czech eyewitnesses from the same area, who provided their perspective from the other side, as it were. It turned out to be an insightful case study of the fate of these communities, previously studied mainly within the context of the national struggle between Germans and Czechs.

The inter-disciplinary research methodology adopted here combines history and sociological research to demonstrate the effect of larger political and social developments on human lives, not shying away from addressing sensitive political and historical issues, as far as these are relevant within the context of the study. The expellees started new lives in what became Neugablonz in post-war Bavaria where they successfully re-established the industries they had had to leave behind in 1945-1946.

Part 1 of the study sheds light on the complex Czech-German relationship of this important Central European region, addressing issues of democracy, ethnicity, race, nationalism, geopolitics, economics, human geography and ethnography. It also charts the developments leading to the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans from Czechoslovakia after 1945. What is important in this War Child study is how the expellees remember their history while living as children in Sudetenland and later. The testimony data gained indicate that certain stereotypes often repeated within the context of Sudeten issues such as the confrontational nature of inter-ethnic relations are not reflected in the testimonies of the respondents from Gablonz.

In Part 2 the War Child Study explores the memories of the former Sudeten war children using sociological research methods. It focuses on how they remember life in their Bohemian homeland and coped with the life-long effects of displacement after their expulsion. The study maps how they turned adversity into success by showing a remarkable degree of resilience and

ingenuity in the face of testing circumstances due to the abrupt break in their lives. The thesis examines the reasons for the relatively positive outcome to respondents' lives and what transferable lessons can be deduced from the results of this study.

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Research Strand 1: History as experienced by sixteen German Research Participants,
born 1933-1940 in Gabonz, Jablonec nad Nisou

and

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Preface

The 20th century must rank as one of the most violent eras in history, with two world wars in its first half, causing millions of victims on all sides in part as a result of the horrors of population exchanges, ethnic cleansing and genocide. The flight and expulsion of up to 16 million Germans from Central and Eastern Europe in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War resulted in a considerable, but to date unproven number of civilian fatalities. From the end of the Second World War till the fall of Communism the subject was publically a taboo in the countries involved, hardly spoken about, and has only recently attracted academic interest.

Set against this background the lives of former Sudeten German War Children, the focus of this project, are explored in an inter-disciplinary study. Going back some years to the time when the researcher relocated from Austria to Britain it seemed that whenever Sudeten issues made a rare appearance in the media or in public and private discussions about the Second World War, the only point of reference was the connection with Munich and Appeasement, frequently accompanied by sweeping statements about the pre-war political choices of the Sudeten population. This seemed a very tight time-frame for a complex subject deserving closer attention. After much deliberation and some preliminary research focusing on the complexities of Bohemian (Sudeten) history the researcher was offered the chance to pursue research in the subject by the Institute of Education, University of Reading, as part of a research project in War Child Studies headed by Dr. Martin Parsons.

Part 1 of the study investigates the historico-political reasons behind the forcible removal of the Sudeten children and their families from their homelands in Czechoslovakia after the end of the Second World War. Part 2 examines aspects of life before, during and after their expulsion and the life-changing effects of this break in history on the children. The research explores issues surrounding their expulsion from the town of Gablonz/Jablonec in a pre-1945 mainly German-inhabited part of the northern Bohemian border region of Czechoslovakia. This also involves an examination of the Czech-German relationship within the larger historical and political context influenced in this case by nineteenth-century nationalism, the painful birth of twentieth-century national states, and the effect of Fascism.

Some factors which can be identified as crucial to the understanding of the phenomenon of ethnic expulsions are universally relevant, such as differences of language, culture, religion, ethnicity or race specific to a particular geographic location, the interplay of political power with one or more of these factors being a decisive element. In this case the co-citizenship of Czechs and Germans between 1848 and 1948 began to be affected by political tensions as a result of minority issues affecting the Germans of Bohemia. As increasing nationalism on both sides developed over time, aspects of identity started to gain importance in an environment which

had previously been part of a largely nationally indifferent population, ethnically and linguistically mixed for centuries.

Post-1918 the shift of political influence from the German-speakers to the Czechs had a bearing on inter-war politics and social dynamics in the new state of Czechoslovakia. In spite of appearances, measures taken by the Czech Government to deal with its nationality problems would soon be perceived as undemocratic by the German-speakers and Magyars (Hungarians) within its borders. The thorny problem of minority rights for the many ethnic groups which after the Paris Peace Settlements found themselves within the borders of the new country would eventually lead to "Munich".

Something which is often forgotten when referring to the nationally charged times of 1918 -1945 is the presence of a large but unquantifiable group on both sides, the so-called "nationally indifferent" members of both populations. As they could never become a cohesive political force, their influence and that of the Churches could not prevent the destructive course of history in Central Europe during the first half of the 20th century. Whether the fate which befell the German civilian population in Central and Eastern Europe after 1945 was inevitable, is a question answered in many different ways, depending on the angle of the perspective adopted. The question of culpability, who were victims or perpetrators is subject to differing interpretations to this day, and Czech-German matters relating to the same realities are frequently still seen from different angles and through different lenses. Fascism, German dictatorship, the Occupation of Czechoslovakia, the role of the post-1945 Czechoslovak government under Beneš and 40 years of Communism have all played a decisive role in dividing Czech-German attitudes to the "transfer" of the Germans from Czechoslovakia.

An important component of the research is the social research undertaken, which relates to the consequences and effects on Sudeten German children who had been up-rooted through expulsion. Taking all the factors into account, this multi-faceted and multi-lingual research project was undertaken almost 70 years after the event, just in time to record the testimony of surviving German and Czech eye-witnesses. Its purpose is to open a window on the difficult times both communities experienced in the last century, including the effects of the post 1945 population transfer on the lives of those affected and those left behind.

The town and district of Gablonz/Jablonec was chosen not only because it was a famous example as a place of industrial excellence for glassware but also for the unique characteristics of its population. Though being mainly German with a relatively small Czech minority, it exhibited special qualities as a well integrated body of people irrespective of nationality. Its history offers insight into a number of aspects of the Czech-German relationship through the ages, particularly the politics between the middle of the 19th to the middle of the 20th century. Gablonz's rapid development during pre-1914 Habsburg times into a specialist production centre for exquisite fashion jewellery was possible only because of the willingness of the

Czech-German working population to cooperate with one another irrespective of ethnicity. Each worker knew that he was part of an inter-dependent chain of people, all providing different specialist skills to achieve a faultless end-product. This shaped the very special way inter-human and inter-ethnic relationships evolved in the workplace and general environment of Gablonz.

After being expelled the Germans' pre-expulsion community spirit and highly developed work ethic helped them overcome post-expulsion adversity. They successfully re-established their industries in a district of Kaufbeuren, Bavaria, later named Neugablonz, where approximately 20,000 Old-Gablonzers settled post-war and re-started what they were forced to leave from most basic and primitive beginnings. German post-war economic measures as well as a very special community spirit with an abundance of social capital, developed in the Gablonz of old, soon led to success and independence of those who had settled in Neugablonz.

Choosing Gablonz-Neugablonz as the focus for the research in this project offered one of the best opportunities to access a cohesive body of German respondents from Sudetenland still alive who would remember the shared times of the Czech and Germans before and during the war. Importantly they were able to demonstrate the post-expulsion transition from a very low point in their families' existence to again leading productive and successful lives. Now in their 70s and 80s the group of Neugablonz respondents provided detailed testimonies in answer to targeted questionnaires about their life-stories before and after their "Stunde null" (hour of zero) in 1945. Their testimonies were subsequently supplemented by another group of Gablonz expellees, now residents of Schwaebisch-Gmuend who added extra information valuable to the research.

Fortunately six additional Czech respondents were eventually found after some difficulty as very few of the original Czechs of Gablonz/Jablonec are now left. They were able to fill in some of the gaps on certain aspects of life in Sudetenland up to 1945 which were outside the spectrum of the German childrens' experiences. Their ethnic group was once a well established minority in a mainly German language area, making up 16.50% of the town's population and 10% in the District of Gablonz overall according to the 1930 Census results for Czechoslovakia.

Analysis of the differences in the testimonies from Czechs and Germans on the periods: pre-1938, 1938 to 1945 and beyond, demonstrates that a nationally specific version of the same past events is still present in the consciousness of each ethnic group. However, the passage of time appears to have modified attitudes in line with conciliatory attitudes encouraged by the governments of the countries concerned, which are cooperating on a number of joint initiatives..

Academic research by younger academics since 1989 has also helped to widened horizons by demonstrating that nationalism was by no means the only aspect of life dominant in the region as nationally indifferent behaviour in the population was found to have existed in parallel. Due

to the Czech-German language gap, the cross-over of information available in the public sphere is still patchy, reducing the chance to acquire a balanced overview of all the issues involved. Therefore old perceptions of the “other” are still too often perpetuated, something this thesis, produced in English, by now an almost universal language, might help to alleviate.

Chapter 1

The Literature Review

The citation system used is APA (The American Psychological Association).

The Literature Review presented in this Chapter will highlight the politico-historical developments in Bohemian lands since the beginning of the 19th century. There are two distinct periods in Czech-German historiography, the first one up to 1989 highlights the national differences as a divisive element between the Czechs and Germans. Thereafter, in a new approach taken by western scholars from the 1990s, different angles of the same subject were examined allowing perspectives to emerge which were independent of national stereotypes. They identified an important but unquantifiable non-national group within the multi-ethnic societies in the lands of the Habsburg Monarchy that of “nationally indifferent” citizens. Though present in Bohemian lands and the later Czechoslovakia their lack of national fervour never generated the political energy needed to effectively challenge the influence of the radical Czech and German nationalists.

1.1 The Historical Background

The Literature Review will be guided by a selection of mostly secondary sources on issues emerging from research on the overarching research question of the study:

What were the historic-political root-causes of the 20th century inter-war ethnic conflict in Czechoslovakia? How could a political situation develop, where the only solution considered desirable was the expulsion between 1945 and 1948 of approximately 3.5 million Sudeten Germans speakers from their ancestral Bohemian homelands?

The review will start with literature from the 19th century, a time when the previously relative stable ethnic co-existence of the nationalities within the Habsburg Empire started to come under increasing pressure. From the middle of that century national objectives by Czechs and Germans in Bohemian lands were pursued with increasing vigour and tenacity.

The post-Napoleonic nascent Czech quest for independence from the Habsburg Empire soon came into direct conflict with that regime’s struggle to maintain political stability among all the nationalities within its borders. Having witnessed the manifestations of the Czech nationalists’ struggle for emancipation and their intense efforts to achieve it during the late 19th and early 20th century, the Bohemian Germans’ reaction was one of growing alarm. Perceiving Czech actions as disloyalty to the Empire and a threat to everything they valued as German-speakers, they too became avid practitioners of nationalism.

To their great disappointment, national self-determination was not an option offered to the Bohemian Germans at the Paris Peace Negotiations after the end of the First World War. As a result the previous Kingdom of Bohemia, a crown land of the Habsburg Empire up to 1918, became the western part of the new state of Czechoslovakia. Many Bohemian German-speakers resented having become a minority under the new Czech Slav Government and much regretted the passing of the Empire. In March 1919 the transfer of power over the German majority regions was enforced by Czech military intervention, perceived as hostile and only reluctantly accepted by just over 3 million German-speakers.

1.2 Two nationalities – two different Interpretations of History

An analysis of Czech and German historiography of Bohemia-Moravia and Czech Silesia, since 1993 known as the Czech Republic, is not a simple matter as one has to allow for the dual nature of the historical narrative and the sensitivity of the subject. Each ethnic group developed its own version of history over time, which entered mainstream consciousness of both peoples often clouded by stereotypes, with a “Geschichtsbild” (image of history), quite different from the “other” (Čapek, 2014).

The Czechs saw their history shared with the Bohemian Germans through an interpretation that supported territorial claims by their national group on German lands up to the traditional borders of what had been the Bohemian Kingdom. On the other hand the German narrative supported what they considered their ancient rights in regions where German-speakers were the majority. On the face of it this divisive issue was solved in 1918 when the Czechs’ territorial ambitions were fulfilled and their Slavic government considered itself empowered to decide how the new state of Czechoslovakia was to be run without involving representatives of the German Bohemians or Sudeten Germans as they were soon referred to.

With their regions adjoining Germany in the North and West and Austria in the South, being joined to those countries would have been the solution of their choice. However, to their disappointment their wishes for a plebiscite (Koch & Rauscher, 1996, p. 267) on this issue had not been granted.

Subsequently inter-war Czechoslovakia existed as a democratic republic for 20 years during which time Czech-German ethnic and political tensions intensified, reaching fever-pitch in the late 30s. These were followed by “Munich”, Hitler’s annexation of the Sudetenland in 1938, the occupation of the Central Czech areas which became the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, and from 1939 the Second World War. After the collapse of Nazi Germany in May 1945, the Czechs’ perception of their historic right to the German borderlands was realised by the expulsions of the Germans, officially proclaimed as a consequence of their collective

culpability in respect of the war as well as all Nazi crimes which deserved retribution (Bryant, 2006, pp. iii -16). As the Second World War drew to its end, this message had become increasingly emphatic in broadcasts by President Beneš and other members of his government in-exile. After their return from London in 1945 the German expulsions began and were subsequently officially sanctioned by the Allies during the Conference of Potsdam; they had largely served their purpose by the end of 1948. By then Czechoslovakia had been re-established as a Slavic country, led by successive Communist governments from 1948 until 1989. In 1993, the Czech Republic and Slovakia agreed to go their separate ways, thus becoming successor states to Czechoslovakia.

To be able to present a representative overview of relevant works one of the major tasks of the Literature Review is to clarify the background to and the reasons for the different strands of historiography found in the general and academic literature. The complexity of the socio-historic and political developments of Czech-German relations before 1945 are still exercising the media and press in Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic, being a regular subject in the public and academic discourse. However, since the fall of Communism and the Czech accession to the European Union, official efforts to bridge old enmities have improved relations between these countries which have become relatively friendly.

A review of sources published before and after 1989 supporting the research in Part 1, the history section of the thesis, will be followed by an analysis of literature appropriate to issues arising from war child and social research aspects connected with Part 2, the Memory Study.

In respect of history and politics, references to literature on Austrian Bohemia and Czechoslovakia, a successor state, will be dealt with chronologically. Works to the end of the First World War are followed by those written during the inter-war period, and the periods up to the expulsions and beyond, the Communist era and the period after 1989 to the present. Mainly German, Czech and English-language sources have been consulted, as well as some Czech primary sources such as eye-witness accounts and a hand-typed chronicle spanning the war years. These documents were either written by Czech German-speakers or translated into German.

1.3 The Czech-German historiographic Split

The later years of the Enlightenment were followed by a rise of nationalism in Europe from the first part of the 19th century onwards. The Czech interpretation of their joint history with the Bohemian Germans was significantly influenced by the way their narrative was portrayed in Palacký's 19th century work on the *The History of the Czech Nation in Bohemia and Moravia* (Palacký, 1836–67) which is discussed in detail at a later stage. In an era of empires he

believed that the small nations within them were primordial entities with their own destinies which is how he anticipated the future for his country to unfold. His work awakened a sense of national pride and particularism in the Czech elites and intelligentsia, gradually seeping down the social scale where national indifference had tended to predominate. The Czech professor of history Jiří Kořalka has post-1989 produced valuable assessments of the period which is referred to in Part 1 of the thesis. His essay on the Czech national movement (1993) and his biography of Palacký (2007) represent important contributions in the field.

Once Czech nationalists began to proclaim that it was a patriotic duty to re-conquer the border areas where so-called German “colonists” had lived since the middle-ages, the Bohemian Germans in the borderlands and language islands became increasingly worried. Conscious of their precarious situation vis-a-vis the Czech majority in the rest of the country they tried their best to maintain the status quo where they were in the majority.

What did it mean to be Czech or German? Jeremy King (2002, p. 209) has defined “Czechness” in ethnic-historical and territorial terms in respect of their claim to the German borderland areas, while the Bohemian Germans understood their rights to those regions and the retention of “Germanness” there to be based on historic majority rights and their cultural contribution to Bohemia. According to Milan Řepa (2011) the duality of Czech-German historiographic representation was parallel but outside the Czech national territorial narrative. In the long run neither side could accept the other’s version of the “historical truth”, and in the end the contentious issue of who should be in charge of the German areas was only definitively settled by the post-war German expulsions.

While the Czechs along with other nationalities within pre-1914 Austria-Hungary had become restless and active in promoting their vision of a separate status within the Empire, German-Austrian literature continued to emphasise the old values of the Empire’s supranational role as a benign force attempting to balance the needs of all nationalities. Its ethnic, linguistic and cultural plurality was judged to have been beneficial to all subjects within its boundaries. Suppanz (2011, p.77) quotes the preface (1934) by the Austrian historian von Sribik to his 4 volume work (1935-1942, p.10) on German unity within the Holy Roman Empire where he stated “ ‘ ... the old Monarchy was so far the best political union of the ethnic fragments and small populations, unified in a common territory under German leadership in East Central Europe.’ ”

Though the German-speakers under the Habsburgs had considered themselves as state-bearing, they also thought of themselves as nationally tolerant, but are often described in the Czech narrative as the “Herrenvolk” (master race) as referred to by Elisabeth Wiskemann (1967, p. 66). The identity of the Bohemian Germans was a fusion of three identity components, varying in their importance depending on location and historical period. Primarily they felt locally patriotic, as was also the case in Bohemia and Moravia, while at the same time being loyal

subjects to the Empire. A third identity element, Pan-Germanism, was also present to a greater or lesser degree from the time of its inception during the 19th century. After the birth of Czechoslovakia in 1918 the identities of old, added to by nostalgia for the times and values of the old order, would continue to define the attitudes of many German-speakers. The euphoria of the Czechs about the creation of their new state could therefore not be shared by them. During the interwar period, political developments before “Munich” would bring Sudeten German Bohemian patriotism and latent Pan-Germanism to the surface and be interpreted as disloyalty to Czechoslovakia.

An additional disappointment for German political figures was the assertion in the constitution of February 1920, that Czechoslovakia was the work of the “Czechoslovak nation”, a Czech and Slovak nation-state, with the state-languages to be Czech and Slovak (Agnew 2004, pp. 178-180). The Germans and the other minorities had no part in the consultation process for the country’s new constitution and subsequent legislation according to Johann Wolfgang Bruegel (1973, pp. 53-59). As a result the 3.1 million Bohemian Germans (Czechoslovak Census 1920), now called Sudeten Germans, co-citizens of 6.8 million Czechs, felt disenfranchised. After all, their population was the country’s second largest ethnic group, considerably more numerous than the 2 million Slovaks now in the privileged position of being part of the decision making processes. German bitterness deepened after March 1919, when the Czech police and military moved into the German areas to assert the Czechoslovak state’s sovereignty; moving against unarmed demonstrators in several towns left over fifty Germans dead including two Jewish protestors. It created the first martyrs to the German national cause. This event and the Germans having been excluded from influencing constitutional matters became rooted in the Sudeten collective memory as a powerful symbol of the start to their subordinate status and, in the later interpretation of the Sudeten nationalists, subjugation (Glötz, 2004, pp.106-107, Prinz, 2002, p.384). Apart from the expulsions after 1945, 1918/1919 became the most important years in Sudeten historical consciousness, perceived mainly in negative in terms in respect of the political outcome for the German-speakers.

Czech historians don’t dwell on these issues and when they address them, explain that one of the reasons for their politicians’ decision not to invite the Germans to constitutional negotiations was their resistance to cooperation under Czech leadership (Beneš & Kural, 2000, p. 53). An additional factor was that the Sudeten Germans had no clearly defined political objectives at the time and had considered becoming part of Austria or Germany, at a time when Czechoslovakia had already been proclaimed with the German borderlands as a constituent part.

German historians Emil Franzel (1958, 1967) and Fritz Peter Habel (2005) as well as the late German Social Democrat politician and social scientist Peter Glötz (2004) all point to the fact that the seeds for later nationalist and secessionist activities were sown at that time. The Czech government’s expectation for over 3 million Germans to become loyal citizens in a country with

an expressly Slav and Czechoslovak agenda could not be expected to be successful in the long run. The American historian Nancy M. Wingfield (2007, pp. 231-235) writes, many Germans rejected the exclusivity of the Czechoslovak identity during the time of the First Republic. They came to believe that despite the government's democratic rhetoric equality had not materialised for them and the participation of German political parties cooperating in government coalitions since 1926 had made no difference to their situation. It was considered to be merely window-dressing to enhance the image of Czechoslovak democracy abroad, and a growing number of Germans came to the conclusion that there was little or no room for their own economic and cultural priorities. As a result an increasingly inward looking and defensive perspective developed among the Bohemian Germans of old. At the same time the so-called "Sudeten German" common identity and collective memory emerged, which had become a construct from originally quite diverse and separate historic-geographic and ethno-linguistic roots.

German communities had traditionally been active in a multitude of organisations which were soon to provide a platform for the dissemination of nationalistic ideas and politically orientated activities in the name of German patriotism, increasingly promoting anti-Czech sentiments. The German nationalist leader and founder of the Sudetendeutsche Partei, the SdP, Konrad Henlein, soon inspired a growing number of supporters including many workers who had left other parties such as the Social Democrats. The effects of the Depression had resulted in high unemployment in the borderlands followed by hard times including great deprivation, even starvation. Working people interpreted the Czechoslovak Government's attitude to their plight as unhelpful which in turn accelerated their disaffection with the regime.

1.4 Inter-war Democracy under Stress – Nationalism - "Volkstumskampf" (the fight for Germanness)

In parallel with the political radicalisation in the German regions, democracy in Czechoslovakia came under stress in the face of growing German nationalism. The regime became increasingly authoritarian, with censorship, surveillance of supposedly politically suspect persons by the secret police, and the use of spies. The presence of Czech police at all German patriotic rallies was considered offensive by the Germans but a necessary measure to curb nationalist activities by Prague.

In the 1930s the challenges of everyday existence for Sudeten Germans predominated in mainstream life because a solution for an end to the economic plight in Sudetenland had not materialised. By that time Henlein had succeeded in influencing the political scenario, and eventually, his strategies and the inability of the Government in Prague to find a mutually acceptable solution brought about civic unrest in parts of the borderlands. After breaking point was reached in 1938, "Munich" followed, which gave the German population hope for a positive

outcome to their national problems. However, their optimism was overshadowed by the fear that the political situation would spiral out of control into war (Zimmermann, 2002, p. 68).

Many had looked to Konrad Henlein for a way out. Having at first appeared to support ideas for a federal solution within Czechoslovakia to solve the Sudeten German minority's problems, in Spring 1938 he openly switched to what he called a German ideology. Did it mean broadly just a German way of looking at things or was it a declaration for Nazism and Pan-Germanism? By then the political pre-conditions had been created for the majority of the Sudeten German population to welcome the Annexation of 1938. Konrad Henlein, Heinz Rutha, and the radicals round Karl Hermann Frank had finally successfully led the majority of the Sudeten Germans into believing that only Germany held the keys to their deliverance from what many perceived as their second-class status inside Czechoslovakia.

1.5 Inter-war Literature

German inter-war literature was influenced by the political developments of the time, reflecting awareness of being ruled by a Slav majority. German authors made efforts to demonstrate historic proof of their population's legitimate and indigenous existence in their regions. In parallel with support of political movements aiming to unify the Sudeten Germans, the drift in a more National Socialist direction began to penetrate historical literature on German Bohemia.

Řepa (2011, p. 309) successfully traced the growing divergence of German-Czech historiography in post-1918 Czechoslovakia showing how the Czech writers continued to support the nationalist concepts of their government. The Germans on the other hand tried to legitimise the claim to their areas with a surge of research into German settlement history at the German University of Prague. Results favourable to the German case can be found in the works of two once respected professors of history at the German University of Prague before 1945, Wilhelm Wostry, a German historian and author of some renown and the supporter of National Socialism, Joseph Pfitzner who wrote passionately about "Sudetendeutschtum" and its significance for German-speakers.

According to Nina Lobmann (2008), Wostry taught Bohemian history at the German University of Prague and published a number of works in respect of the former German part of it (Wostry, 1922; 1943). His research led him to disagree with the Czech narrative of the Germans not having arrived until the Middle-Ages and considered the original settlements of the Germans in Bohemia and Moravia the result of German tribes' pre-medieval arrival, before any Slav presence. In spite of the prevailing nationalistic atmosphere at the time, he almost exclusively spoke and wrote of "Bohemian Germans" and did not use the term "Sudetenland" or "Sudetendeutsch" until the Winter Term of 1939/40 (in a headline of an events programme).

Thereafter these terms can only be found in the titles of 5 PhDs of 146 supervised by him between 1939 and 1945 (Lobmann, 2008, p.136). Lobmann assumes him to have been a "...willing helper ..." to the NS regime (p.149) because he supported the idea that Bohemian lands always constituted an inseparable part of the German world.

After 1938 Sudeten German historiography was heavily influenced by National Socialist concepts particularly reflected in the writings of Pfitzner (1901-1945). His work was originally respected by Czechs and Germans alike, but his later interpretation of Sudeten history and its historical role incorporated all the features typical of German nationalist historiography and later of Nazi ideology. Not only did he become the chief ideologist for Konrad Henlein and the SdP at a time of extreme German nationalism, but he was politically active in support of the Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia, as well as Germanisation plans, factors which led to his downfall and public execution in the centre of Prague in 1945 (Kocová, 2005).

Czech historians between the wars engaged with the nationality problem from their own perspective. According to Řepa (2011), Joseph Pekař (1929), a member of the Czech community of historians and professor at the Czech Charles University, always advocated the need for adherence to the Historical Bohemian State Law, meaning Bohemia being kept as a unit within its historic borders. This stance was in sharp contrast to the idea of national self-determination in relation to the German minority, but Pekař also stressed the spiritual importance of the Hussite movement on the German Reformation as a link between the two nationalities.

A more conciliatory tendency is represented by the Czech historian and diplomat Kamil Krofta (1938), whose writings about Bohemia and Germany during the course of history acknowledge the important role the Germans of Bohemia had played. He believed their cooperation with and loyalty to the Czechoslovak state was possible, even with the Germans adhering to their own cultural and national concepts, as long as they abrogated racism.

In respect of the way historians and politicians in Britain treated the time of the First Czechoslovak Republic, two separate attitudes had emerged. One was sympathetic to the efforts of a young country trying to establish itself in a democratic framework, in spite of an increasingly fascist threat from outside as well as from within, and at the same time having to overcome great difficulties on account of its minorities. The implication was that the inter-war republic, represented by Masaryk and later Beneš¹, was the logical outcome of more than a

¹ Dr. Edvard Beneš (1884-1948) was the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the first Czechoslovak Republic and the second President of the country after the death of President Masaryk in 1935. He was known as a committed Czech nationalist politician and a skilled diplomat who was ultimately responsible for the removal of the German Bohemians from the country.

century of national resurgence and persistent struggle for freedom. R.W. Seton-Watson, historian and political activist (Seton-Watson, 1943) and R. H. B. Lockhart, author, journalist, secret agent and liaison officer between the British Government and the Czechoslovak Government in-exile both promoted a Czechophile line in their writings about Czechoslovakia. Both were to be disappointed by the 1948 Communist take-over in post-war Czechoslovakia (Lockhart, 1953).

On the eve of Munich Elisabeth Wiskemann, a remarkable and well informed British journalist of German-Jewish extraction wrote very knowledgeably about inter-war Czech-German political difficulties. Before Munich she sensed what was about to happen, and although she was clearly sympathetic to the Czech cause, she had a good grasp of the German grievances (Wiskemann, 1938, 1968).

Another view was less sympathetic to the Czech cause - it pointed to misinformation and trickery used at the time of the Paris Peace negotiations, without which the establishment of polyglot Czechoslovakia would have been unlikely. For the minorities the reality behind skilfully maintained myths was not quite as the inter-war Czechophile lobby would have the world believe. It had been experienced less positively by the non-Czech ethnic groups, the largest being just over 3 million Germans as well as half a million Magyars.

Even before events approached the Munich Crisis criticisms were voiced in Britain and abroad about the shortcomings of the inter-war Czechoslovak Government's interpretation of democratic principles. It was noted that it had become increasingly autocratic, trying to control anything deemed to be in support of German nationalist activities by legislation, censorship and police surveillance, all of which added fuel to a fire already smouldering. Also the polyglot nature of Czechoslovakia's ethnic make-up was not considered very auspicious for the future of the country. In September 1938, when German-Czech politics were on a knife edge, Lord Runciman delivered his Report (Runciman, 1938, September 21) to Prime Minister Chamberlain. In it he acknowledged the validity of Sudeten German claims about their difficult situation within Czechoslovakia, and was dismissive about Czech policies towards the Germans. Lord Runciman was also critical of President Beneš generally procrastinating and side-stepping what he considered justified German grievances. "Munich", the annexation of the Sudetenland, the creation of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and the Second World War followed.

Detlef Brandes (2010) and Volker Zimmermann (2002) critically portray the increasing turmoil between well organised Sudeten Henlein supporters and their opponents which peaked in the September crisis of 1938. As the political scenario in Sudetenland deteriorated close to civil war, three journalists who covered news of events as they unfolded, need to be mentioned here. They were Shiela Grant Duff who worked for the Observer, the American William Shirer who reported for American newspapers and broadcasting stations and Jonathan Griffin, a

journalist working for the BBC at a time when it was prudent not to divulge too much in order not to prejudice the British negotiations with Hitler (Vaughan, 2008). Griffin tirelessly drove to all the Sudeten trouble spots and his book, *Lost Liberty?* (1939) provides fascinating eye-witness accounts of skirmishes between Henleinists, anti-Fascists and Communists capturing the tense atmosphere of the last few weeks before the Annexation. His reports, critical of the disruptive activities of - mainly young Sudeten German men, were not broadcast by the BBC but by Czechoslovakia's English shortwave service.

In respect of opinions on Konrad Henlein, Johann Wolfgang Bruegel, writing in the 1970s about inter-war Czech-German affairs, paints him as a Nazi puppet rather than the local patriot he was seen as by many of his supporters. Bruegel includes interesting information on his strategic manoeuvres during visits to Britain. Here he managed to deceive a number of influential politicians and Foreign Office officials into believing him to be a man of his word and moderation (Bruegel, 1973, p.173), an opinion which had to be revised in view of later developments. As far as his supporters are concerned, the American academic Ronald M. Smelser (1975), describes them as either "traditionalists" or "radicals" rather than one-dimensional Nazis. He rather overlooked the important role of Sudeten cultural and recreational associations like the "Turnverein" (gymnastics association), which were the organisations behind Henlein's grass-root support (Cornwall, 1993, pp. 253-255).

1.6 From Annexation to Expulsion

The annexation in September 1938 was swiftly followed by the creation of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (March 1939), and the subsequent outbreak of the Second World War (September 1939), heralding the start of difficult times for both populations. For the Czechs in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia it meant to be compliant under a harsh Nazi regime which used the Czech work-force to support its war effort. The Bohemian Jews, German anti-Fascists and Czechs working for the Resistance as well as their families faced constant acute danger and stress in their everyday lives. Osterloh (2006) has provided valuable research in respect of the persecution of the Bohemian Jews. He has made a detailed study of all the difficulties and dangers affecting their existence after the advent of the Nazi occupation of their homeland. Suddenly being "stamped" as Jews, many were confronted for the first time by the fact that their identities, which they had considered as Jewish, German-Jewish, Czech-Jewish, or just Czech or German, were no longer accepted as valid. Isolation, expropriation, being stripped of all legal rights, meant having to hide or flee, or, if emigration was not an option, being deported to an uncertain fate in the concentration camps.

The Sudeten Germans on the other hand now faced a new political framework which in many ways was not what they had expected. Following the annexation they had initially been

euphoric and were under the impression their problems were now resolved. However, they soon found out that the eyes and ears of the Nazi security forces were everywhere looking for any signs seen as undermining the war-effort (Zimmermann, 2002, pp. 93-96). Additional problems were encountered as all organisations as well as the Sudeten administration were brought into line with Reich regulations (Gleichschaltung) which created wide-spread difficulties and resentments in many quarters. Sudeten Germans considered their circumstances a special case, separate from the Reich, requiring a different approach. In his book on Konrad Henlein Ralf Gebel (2000, pp. 25-42), offers an overview of political developments up to the annexation, followed by an in-depth analysis of the consequences of Sudetenland being an integral part of the Reich. The newly created Sudetengau was designated to be a "Mustergau", an example to be admired, which brought about many changes, one of them a reduction of Henlein's influence and position between 1938 and 1945.

In the Protectorate matters became more dangerous for the Czech population after Reinhard Heydrich's appointment in 1941 as "Acting Reichsprotector" and particularly after his subsequent assassination resulting in terrible reprisals. Robert Gerwarth (2011) and Gustav von Schmoller (1979) provide insight into Heydrich's plans and practices which, besides instigating a regime of terror, also made it a priority to make life for Czech workers more tolerable, as they were to be of use for the German war effort. This he called his immediate objective while his Germanisation plans were put on ice until after the war's successful outcome. René Kuepper's book (2010) on Karl Hermann Frank provides a lucid overview of the motivation behind Frank's decisions before and as Minister of State from 1943. He is, after Heydrich, "the" symbol of evil to Czechs in respect of the German occupation of their country. In spite of the executions during his time in office, and his commitment to Hitler's policies, Frank, according to Kuepper (p. 295), did not think the Czechs should be considered as on a par with "asiatic Untermenschen" (Asian sub-humans) or "coolies" on account of the amount of German blood in them.

For English language general information on inter-war Czechoslovakia and the times of the German occupation of Czechoslovakia and beyond, the following post-1989 authors, Hugh Agnew (2002); Chad Bryant (2007); Derek Sayer (1998), and Zbyněk Zeman and Antonín Klimek (1997) have all covered the essential issues and sub-aspects of the subject matter.

In respect of the traumatic post-Munich experiences of the Czechs, three works by German authors, Von Schmoller, Gerwarth, and Kuepper, stand out on account of excellent research into the times most painful to Czechs in recent history. They are the long six years between 1939 and 1945 under occupation and cruel repression by the Nazi regime.

The defeat of the Reich was received with deep disappointment and anxious foreboding by the majority of the Sudeten people. The message conveyed by President Beneš and his

government in-exile, and the Resistance was that the Germans would have to go, because the Czech population would find it impossible to live with them after what they had had to endure. What the Czech-American historian Radomir Luža (1964) calls deplorable transgressions by Czechs at the time of the Expulsions does not come close to describing what happened in the early months of 1945. Thereafter the description of the expulsions, as “orderly and humane”, sanctioned by the Allies at the Conference of Potsdam, does not adequately convey the subsequent chaos and suffering of German civilians.

Bryant’s book *Prague in Black* (2007) is a key aid to understanding the realities of the German occupation for the Czechs in the Protectorate. He analyses the Nazi regime’s application of nationality policies and the Czechs’ reaction to them, and demonstrates how the interplay of the human element, economic factors, victories and defeats at the front, and the actions and reactions of the Czechs influenced German official policies. He also points to the variables in the challenges people faced in their everyday lives and explores aspects of collaboration and resistance.

Bryant’s essay (2006), *The Thick Line 1945: Czech and German Histories of the Nazi War Occupation and the Post-war Expulsion/Transfer*, offers one of the best analyses of why the Czech and German versions of the post-1938 narrative have persistently been interpreted differently. Rather than being an account of each group’s different collective experiences, historians, political interest groups, governments, and the media have all contributed towards constructing two competing understandings of the past, based on politics, nationalism, and history-writing.

The Czech version stresses the difficult and traumatic occupation years and points to the collective guilt of the rival group as a justification of the post-war expulsions with comparatively little debate on the moral issues involved. The German narrative on the other hand ignores the Czech experience of the occupation years, emphasizing the collective suffering among their compatriots as a result of the forced transfer after the demise of the Reich (Bryant, 2006, pp. iii-16).

As mentioned before, Czech and German historiography has differed to this day in respect of both peoples’ mainstream perceptions of the period from 1938 to 1948, the reasons behind the German expulsions or transfer, a contentious subject to this day. Until recently there was a tendency on each side to claim victim status and to point to “the other” as the perpetrator. However, post-1989 European initiatives like the joint historians’ commissions created by the countries involved² are aiming to find common ground on contentious issues and conciliatory

² The Joint German-Czech and German-Slovak Commission of Historians was established in 1990 by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Germany and Czechoslovakia.

moves on all sides are gradually widening horizons to a common European view dismantling old prejudices (Cornelissen, Holec & Pesek, 2005).

The Czech position on the expulsions, also called “odsun” is well known. Used in propaganda by President Beneš and his political colleagues the major indictment was the perceived German collective guilt in respect of the Annexation and occupation of the rest of Czechoslovakia, the Second World War and all Nazi crimes. Czechs were encouraged to exact retributive justice on the German speakers after they had been stripped of all their legal rights frequently resulting in random violence.

The biography of Edvard Beneš (Zeman & Klimek, 1997) charts the struggles of a man whose life was devoted to Czechoslovakia above all else, first as Tomáš Masaryk’s foreign minister and from 1935 as President of the country, driven into exile between 1938-1945, continuing as President upon his return to Czechoslovakia before the Communist take-over in 1948. He had begun planning the expulsion of the Germans soon after leaving Czechoslovakia and in 1945-1946 was able to witness his plans being fulfilled.

1.7 The Post-war era

In respect of post-war Czech historiography Eagle Glassheim (2001, p. 209), summarised opinions on Czech history and politics vis-a-vis the Germans which had been expressed since the end of the war. He writes “... many post-war Communist historians, and some émigré historians, such as the Czech born Radomír Luža (1964), sought to justify the expulsions as a matter of historical justice and strategic necessity.” In Luža’s opinion the organised transfer was carried out humanely and decently and the issue cannot be reduced to a simple question of moral values (Luža, 1964, pp. 320-321). Reiner Franke (1982, p. 265) described Luža’s work on the German expulsions as seen from a Czech perspective. However, Luža’s well written and detailed account was an interesting early assessment of the whole expulsion issue, based on archival research and containing much statistical information. A number of issues like the chapter on the Czech Resistance against the Nazi occupation are of particular interest. Based on a Czech interpretation he explains the reasons why the Czech public regarded the transfer “as an extremely popular move” (p. 320). He points to German motivations preferring to be part of an expansionist German hegemonic regime, the Third Reich, rather than staying with the liberal democratic Czechoslovak regime, swept away by the Nazis shortly after Munich. That explanation does not take sufficient account of the myriad complexities of the history behind the deterioration of Czech-German relations during the interwar years. As he and his father were members of the Czech Resistance he was able to draw on his experience as to life for Czechs before the creation of the Protectorate, followed by suppression and terror against those judged to be enemies of the Reich.

On returning to Czechoslovakia in 1945 President Beneš and like-minded colleagues labelled all Germans, including Sudeten civilians, as collectively guilty of treason and Nazi crimes. Their post-war presence in Czechoslovakia could not be tolerated as it would have continued to pose a revisionist threat. This interpretation of events was perpetuated after 1948 when the Czech nationalists' version of historiography was successfully hijacked by the Communists. For the next 40 years the work of Czech historians was constrained by the straightjacket of the official Communist version of their history. However, during that time Czech dissidents, including the late Vaclav Havel did acknowledge a different side to their official version of history. Writing under the pseudonym of "Danubius", the distinguished historian and dissident writer, the late Jan Mlynarik (1985), produced work from exile, independent of Communist constraints. He drew attention to the disregard of humanitarian aspects during the time of the expulsions and after the 1948 take-over by the Communists. Post-1989, he and Havel were joined by a number of Czech writers and academics such as Jan Křen, (1990, 2000); Vaclav Kural, (2002) and Tomáš Staněk, (1995, 2001, 2002) who provided valuable new insights in the field. Their research, discussed at a later stage, has been invaluable in helping to prove or disprove certain "truths" previously taken as gospel.

Echoes of the Czech nationalist-Communist view of history can still be found in the public discourse and media in the present Czech Republic. As observed by the author on Continental Satellite news channels and in the online press, anti-German and anti-Austrian polemics are still used, particularly by Czech politicians 70 years after the end of the last war. This becomes particularly noticeable at Czech election times as recently as January 2013, judging by reports in respected Austrian newspapers (Ultsch, 2013) and the German press (Schmidt, 2013) and was acknowledged by Jan Čapek, University of Pardubice, in a lecture to a German audience (2014, March).

Although it is accepted that Hitler's occupation of Czechoslovakia had a traumatic effect on Czechs, particularly in the Protectorate, the Sudeten Germans have argued that in the areas of Sudetenland life continued without great disruption. However, Nazi propaganda presented an idealised picture which could not be questioned openly. Few were in a position to receive accurate information how non-Germans fared, particularly in the Protectorate. As far as Gablonz was concerned most of the local Czechs had arrived there before 1914 in search of work in the booming jewellery industry, were very much in the minority, and later largely integrated. As in other areas those who had reason to fear or opposed the political changes of 1938, Jews, German and Czech anti-Fascists, as well as Czechs who had been encouraged by the Czech Government after 1918 to take up posts in Sudetenland, left as soon as possible (Osterloh 2006, p.158, p.560; Zimmermann, 1999, p. 66).

The German expellees' position reflected in their literature highlights aspects involving human rights abuses, expropriation and compensation issues. In their opinion they should not have

been blamed for events during the Reich's occupation over which the civilian population had no control. It therefore did not justify the retributive violence against them which followed the end of the war, nor the expropriation and removal from Czechoslovakia of their entire population. They don't consider themselves guilty of the Czech accusations, but have condemned all aspects of the savagery of the Nazi regime ever since the details became common knowledge after the end of the Second World War.

Sudeten German perceptions of how they experienced their history from 1918 to 1945 and beyond were, and up to a point are still characterised by their victim status, (Franzen, 2005). In the past many Sudeten expellees believed the world had persistently misunderstood and misinterpreted their difficult circumstances as a discriminated minority between 1918 and 1938. Surviving expellees maintain that their support locally for the SdP leader Henlein, and later for the annexation was for patriotic reasons. Growing frustrations and dissatisfaction with the Czech inter-war government rather than admiration for Nazi politics and Fascist ideology were behind their political choices (Brandes, 2009). One of the major grievances was the failure of the Czechoslovak government to honour the promises at Versailles in relation to minority rights which were part of the Austrian-Czechoslovak Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, ratified in Vienna, March 10, 1921.

1.8 German Expulsion Literature

After the expulsion a great deal of "Heimat" (homeland) literature was produced, also containing a lot of primary material, testimonies of events as experienced by expellees and refugees, often making for harrowing reading. This material, often regarded as partisan, is mostly centred on the specific former home areas of the authors. At that time the bonds to the former Bohemian (*) homeland were still alive and anchored in the expellees' recent personal and cultural memory. Post-war German historians and academics, mainly persons who had recently been deprived of their homeland and research base, were frequently accused of polemicism when dealing with Bohemist studies. They addressed the subject of Sudeten contemporary history in a way that echoed perceptions and interpretations of a Sudeten particularism typical of the 1950s, providing fuel for the post-war demands for restitution of property by some of the more radical expellee associations.

(*) To this day Sudeten families refer to their previous homeland, the former German borderlands of Czechoslovakia, as "(Deutsch) Boehmen" and many including a number of respondents have always referred to themselves as "Deutschboehmen" rather than Sudeten Germans.

One of the most influential compilations of primary sources following the expulsion was a four-volume collection of witness testimonies recorded by an independent commission of lawyers and historians authorised by the post-war German Federal Ministry for Expellees and

Refugees. Started soon after the end of the war it was published between 1953 and 1960, edited by Professor Theodor Schieder in *Dokumente zur Austreibung der Sudetendeutschen*, events in Czechoslovakia after 1945 are dealt with in volumes 3/4. Any research addressing the issue of the post-war displacement and mistreatment of the German populations from Central and Eastern Europe would be incomplete without reference to the contents of the Schieder dossier. Other well known German authors of that era are the historians Wilhelm Turnwald (1951), and Emil Franzel (1958; 1967) and Friedrich Peter Habel (2005) who are often regarded as representing post-war Sudeten German attitudes.

In later decades German historians approached the subject matter in a more differentiated and critical manner trying to break free of old stereotypes. Since the 1960s younger researchers have attempted to find wider horizons than their predecessors. The Collegium Carolinum, established in 1956, successor institution to the History Department of the German University of Prague pre-1945, has been encouraging and supporting research projects in *Bohemist* studies. Their digital archive, at <http://www.ostdok.de/>, is a well organised and user-friendly treasure-trove of literature on multiple aspects of East Central and East European history. Research undertaken for the CC seeks out and provides evidence of communality in the joint Czech-German mutual history of Bohemian lands.

Further to the Czech-German theme in modern Czech historiography, Milan Řepa (2011, pp. 322-323) singles out the work of the Czech writer Jan Křen (1990, 1992, 2000) who, avoiding the usual stereotypes which had accumulated over time, tried to incorporate the lost ethos of compromise, tolerance and democratic values into the Czech historic discourse. In his opinion neither Czech nor German history should be regarded merely as the result of tragic events or circumstances rather he considered it important to look at Czech history within the whole context of Central Europe as one of parallel histories of its Czech, German and Jewish inhabitants.

Detlef Brandes (2001, 2005, 2009) is at the forefront of German research after 1989 into the pre-war development of the Czech-German conflict, and German nationalist actions and behaviour from the 1930s till the end of the war, as well as the reasons, planning and execution of the population transfer from Czechoslovakia. His recent work *Die Sudetendeutschen im Krisenjahr 1938*, (2009) is the culmination of his immense research engagement with the subject since the late 60s. Rather than re-examining the international perspective on Sudeten motivations and actions he concentrates on how the Sudeten public experienced the ups and downs of their situation in Sudetenland of 1938. Professor Emilia Hrabovich (1996) investigated the expulsions from Moravia, the legal framework and the effects on those affected while Glotz (2004) provides a well written overview into the history and politics leading up to events in 1945-1946.

Gebel (2000), mentioned earlier, filled a gap in the literature with his book *„Heim ins Reich!“, Konrad Henlein und der Reichsgau Sudetenland (1938-1945)* in which he presents the political and administrative history of the Sudetenland after it had become the Sudetengau and part of the Reich. The book focuses on the role of its political leader, the “Gauleiter” and “Reichstatthalter” Konrad Henlein, his plans and position after the Annexation and his subsequent relationship with the Reich, the NS Party and the SS. He portrays Henlein’s difficulties and frequent conflict with Reich officials within the artificially created situation of the new Reich Sudeten administration, with its own regional priorities often ignored under Berlin’s centralist policies. Henlein comes across as a person who, rather than being master of the political situation in Sudetenland, was swept along by the national-political circumstances of the time and deprived of real power once the Sudetenland was incorporated into the Reich. In the end his efforts on behalf of the Sudeten people had, as it turned out, led to a disaster of considerable magnitude. His call “Heim ins Reich” had become a cruel reality (p. 361).

The German academic Volker Zimmermann (2002) lucidly clarifies both the Czech and German positions in respect of the expulsions. He explains that in Czech Communist historiography and publications the unchallenged notion that almost all Sudeten Germans were loyal supporters of Hitler was wide-spread, an argument which counted as the moral cause for the expulsions. From the expellee associations on the other hand the impression was conveyed that hardly any Sudeten Germans had any control over events in the Sudetengau, and thus do not acknowledge responsibility over the crimes committed under the Nazi dictatorship.

The subject of the German expulsions had until recently been little more than a footnote in otherwise respected English-language publications on the era in question. There is just one uninformative paragraph in M. Fulbrook’s *History of Germany since 1800*. (1997, 2009, p.367), no mention at all in M. Kitchen’s *The Cambridge Illustrated History of Germany* (2000), and one paragraph on p. 224 in the 441 pages of Agnew’s monograph *The Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown*.

However, a valuable contribution to help understand the background to the expulsions is an essay written in 2006 by the American specialist in the contemporary history of Bohemian lands Chad Bryant. In it a number of important issues are examined and succinctly summarised in respect of how the notion of German guilt vis-a-vis the Czechs began to take shape and enter Czech consciousness long before the end of the Second World War. A number of themes had been repeatedly emphasised in the propaganda of the Czechoslovak government in-exile: Henlein’s support by the Sudeten Germans, the injustice of the Munich agreement, Czech resistance to Nazi occupation and rule, and the occupiers’ treatment of the Czechs. Stressing Nazi terror and the Lidice and Ležaky massacres as examples, the President-in-exile, Edvard Beneš, and his government created a powerful additional theme: German guilt (p. 8). Writings

produced by mythmakers often re-enforced by graphic images (p. 10) helped to fix the image of Nazi cruelty in Czech memory. As “German” and “Nazi” were soon successfully merged into the same concept, it served to highlight firstly the need for retribution and secondly to justify the subsequent forced transfer of the Germans (Bryant, 2006, pp. 8-10).

As far as Czech perceptions of the German expulsions are concerned two historians, professors of German studies, Uwe Kreyer and Jiří Stomšík (1999, p. 308) argue that for a long time “... the circumstances surrounding the cause of their transfer were like a form of collective amnesia” among Czechs. Professor Robert Pynsent, a specialist in Czech and Slovak literature (University College London, School of Slavonic and Eastern European Studies) made it clear what in his opinion gave the history of the Bohemian Lands its shape for the second half of the twentieth century. It was not just Communist Party-imposed and Czech self-imposed amnesia but Western belief in the idea of the Czechs as a nation of sufferers as well as “plucky” (Pynsent, 2007).

In respect of the pre-1989 Czech-German treatment of their joint historiography Jan Pauer (1998) of the Research Centre on Eastern Europe, Bremen, asks the question why even relatively recently democrats, who acknowledge the same values and principles, were divided about crucial events in the past. His article is an investigation of the deficits of the moral arguments on both sides, something which even today is still a subject for debate.

The Czech historians Tomáš Staněk (1995, 2001, 2002), Zdeněk Beneš and Václav Kural (1992, 2002) have contributed considerably to the field via in-depth research into “odsun” or transfer from Czech documents and archival sources available in post-Communist times. Staněk’s work provides descriptions rather than assessments or attempting interpretations of the underlying factors, legitimisation, execution and effect of the German transfers. He infers, however, that later suppression of citizen rights under Communism was a logical progression from the treatment meted out to the Germans, once they were denied the protection of the law. Beneš and Kural explore the reasons which caused the divisions between the Czech-German populations of Bohemia and the developments leading to conflict and the expulsions. Jiří Kořalka (1993, 2007) has more recently made a major contribution in the field by writing a biography of František Palacký.

German translations of Czech works have been and are still published by Oldenbourg under the auspices of the Collegium Carolinum in Munich, a centre for research on all aspects of Bohemian history and politics, always seeking to promote works which go beyond what separates Czech-German national perceptions and looks for common areas within the field.

In the English-speaking academic world, the subject of Bohemian German, Sudeten and/or Expulsion issues has more recently been dealt with by English historians, Mark Cornwall and Richard Evans (2007); Matthew Frank (2007); Keith Lowe (2012); Giles MacDonogh (2008); Robert Pynsent (2007) and Derek Sayer (1998). American academics who have recently made a valuable contribution in the field are Ray Douglas (2012); Benjamin Frommer (2005); Eagle Glassheim (2006); Norman Naimark (2002) and Timothy Waters (2006).

The first work in the genre was Norman M. Naimark's work *Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-Century Europe* (2001), providing a study of five examples of ethnic displacement, including the German Expulsions from Czechoslovakia. His well researched and impartial treatment of the complexities inherent in the subject opened a window on the harrowing history of genocide, ethnic cleansing and population transfer during the 20th century. Further research on the expulsions from Czechoslovakia and ethnic cleansing was undertaken by two American scholars Eagle Glassheim (2001, 2004) and Benjamin Frommer (2005) who must be credited with having provided an invaluable service to all who are trying to untangle the many strands of Czech-German animosities in the past. His analysis shows how the pent-up rage about the Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia led to the floodgates being opened on revenge and retribution against Germans and Czech collaborators in the name of patriotism and national purification. Timothy Waters (2006) examines legal and human rights issues connected with aspects of the German expulsions, including the Beneš Decrees.

An author, whose recent work on these issues needs to be included in this review, is the American historian Ray W. Douglas. His book, *Orderly and Humane: The Expulsion of the Germans after the Second World War* (2012) is based on archival records of the countries that carried out the forced migrations and the records of international humanitarian organizations rather than eye-witness testimony. However, the findings correlated nonetheless. He explores how the expulsions were planned and executed by the governments of post-1945 Central and Eastern Europe, what effect they had on the approximately 14-16 million Germans displaced from the East, and how this legacy still reverberates today in the countries concerned.

Matthew Frank (2008) explores British perceptions in respect of the expulsions of Germans from Poland and Czechoslovakia while also focusing on the realities of what expellees had to face. His descriptions of brutal treatment, starvation, sickness and being held in subhuman conditions in detention camps are harrowing. By writing about the reactions of politicians, civil servants, diplomats, academics, journalists, relief workers and the public, one gets a very good impression of the shock with which visitors to the areas of the population transfers responded to the situation. While most British observers accepted the principle of the transfers there was consistent unease about the practicalities and outcomes from a humanitarian perspective

Keith Lowe (2012) presents a powerful picture of post 1945 Europe at its most vicious, traumatised and dysfunctional and shows how concepts of morality become elusive when perpetrators become victims and victims turned into perpetrators.

Among German historians Detlef Brandes is a well known expert whose latest work (2009) has again put many issues in perspective.

1.9 Nationalism: Western Scholars - A new historiographical Approach

Czechoslovak archives and document collections became accessible again in the post-Communist era since 1989 prompting a younger generation of western scholars to re-examine the past in Bohemian lands and Czechoslovakia after 1918. Interesting research results emerged in respect of the realities of the Czech-German ethnic co-existence in Bohemia-Moravia, presenting a very much more differentiated picture than the black and white depictions of nationalist conflict found in earlier publications. Convincing evidence in this newer literature showed that fluidity of national perceptions of both populations was a prominent feature particularly before the end of the First World War but also during the inter-war period. The new research highlights the importance of the “nationally indifferent” section of Czech-German communities, previously overlooked.

Before 1989 the period in question was defined mainly in nationalist terms challenging the benign view previously mentioned in respect of political life in the Habsburg Empire. Instead it was frequently described by nationalist Slav writers as a “prison of nations”, a concept challenged by research insights by the respected American scholar Pieter Judson (2006, 2008) and others such as Jeremy King (2002) and Tara Zahra (2008) whose research into the many facets of the Czech-German co-existence has added to our understanding of the complexities of the nature of ethnic interaction in Bohemian lands.

Judson helped to shape the way present day scholars view nationality issues in Central European history. His study of the nature of nationalism and nationalisation in pre-1914 Habsburg lands is an exploration of the interaction between nationalist activists and nationally indifferent ethnic groups in rural communities. In a lecture to an audience at Swarthmore College (2008) he argued that despite problems arising from its multi-ethnic make-up Austria-Hungary was in fact a genuinely constitutional state with no ruling nation, no legally oppressed minority nations, and one with no national identity.

In respect of Czech-German national consciousness a situation of ambiguity and ethnic fluidity is shown in these newer sources as having persisted even after the end of the Habsburg Empire. This is also confirmed in a number of testimonies submitted for this study and will be

discussed at a later stage. Individuals generally and also near the language borders where nationalism was supposed to be raging, would opportunistically alternate between nationalities as it suited them (Mark Cornwall, 1997; Judson, 2006; King, 2002; Zahra, 2008). However, demographic and political problems arose because of increasing Czech migration across the language borders of German Bohemia and Moravia between 1870 and 1940. Cornwall was able to show how unsettling the resulting political development was to the Germans and how it "... dramatically stirred up tensions which were at the very root of the Sudeten problem in the 1930s" (Cornwall, 1994, p. 950).

In his book, *Guardians of the Nation: Activists on the language frontiers of imperial Austria*, Judson (2006) engages with the myriad multi-lingual and multi-national kaleidoscopic local variations present in different areas of the Habsburg Empire. He argues that "language frontiers", considered so very important by nationalist activists, were in fact constructs of an idea which frequently did not represent reality. In many locations multiple languages would be spoken and many locals displayed either national indifference or identified themselves with more than one nationality (Judson, 2006, p. 2).

One example was the situation in the provincial town of Budweis/České Budějovice in Southern Bohemia as described in King's study (2002), *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans. A Local History of Bohemian Politics, 1848-1948*. Here local circumstances are shown to reflect national and nationalistic trends during a century of radical changes. King points to a "triadic" national structure (p.11) in Habsburg lands and Bohemia till 1918, with Czechs, Germans and people of either fluctuating national allegiance or nationally indifferent were living alongside one another. His work examines the themes of nationhood and nationalism within the complex socio-political interplay locally, as well as in the wider context of Bohemia and the Empire. He demonstrates that a large proportion of the population in Austria-Hungary generally, and in Bohemia in particular remained nationally indifferent, some being "Habsburg treu" (loyal to the Habsburg Empire) but displaying a parallel locally patriotic identity irrespective of ethnicity.

As far as theoretical aspects of nationhood and nationalism are concerned authors such as Benedict Anderson (1991) have provided new perspectives on the inter-action of ethnic communities by introducing the concept of "imagined communities". In his opinion a "nation" is a socially constructed community, which is present in the imagination of the people who perceive themselves as part of that group and therefore also constitute a community of interest. Anderson's analyses and conclusions also apply to the situation in Bohemian lands and later in Czechoslovakia before 1945, where both Czechs and Germans had defined themselves in equal measure as citizens of the same country since times immemorial. As the study will show, the German population regarded themselves as German Bohemian and Austrian Bohemian. In cases of mixed marriages national fluidity persisted until the German occupation of Czechoslovakia when it became a requirement to choose either Czech or German nationality.

Zahra (2008) produced very original research on Czech-German national activism involving the lives of children in *Kidnapped souls: National Indifference and the Battle for Children in the Bohemian Lands 1900-1948*. Here aspects of Czech and German nationalists' beliefs about children, family, democracy, and minority rights are reflected, revealing attitudes and opinions present in the Czech and German populations between 1900 and 1948. Just one example of a number of interesting incongruities in respect of national loyalties is mentioned here. Even after 1938, when both Czech and Sudeten German nationalism was strong, thousands of Czech speakers registered for German citizenship while many German-speakers in occupied Bohemia and Moravia did not. "The refusal of many German speakers to declare themselves German provoked great bitterness among Nazi authorities" (Zahra 2008, p. 183).

The works of the authors Theodore Mills Kelly (2003), Nancy Wingfield (2007), Andrea Orzoff (2009) and Mary Heimann (2011) have provided new insights into the policies, strategies and manoeuvres employed to maintain the positive image of Czechoslovakia at home and abroad. The carefully constructed benign image of the First Republic presented to the world by Czech politicians and diplomats since 1918 has more recently been recognised as having been rather too perfect. The authors referred to above have re-examined the Czech historical narrative, not shying away from referring to the myths created to promote the image of the "Golden Republic" of Czechoslovakia during the inter-war years. They also offer a critical assessment of democratic practice in inter-war Czechoslovakia and the methods used to help realise the goals and dreams of Masaryk, Beneš and others (Orzoff, 2009, pp. 3-23). Heimann caused controversy because she ascribed some responsibility for the Czech-German difficulties during the inter-war period to Czech chauvinism towards the minorities. In this context Cornwall (2012) has provided an example of the flaws in the application of democratic principles by the Czech authorities during the First Republic such as police surveillance and the hounding of persons considered personally or politically suspect. His book about the Sudetendeutsch politician Heinrich Rutha demonstrates how his sexuality was used against him in a government-orchestrated smear campaign.

Mark Cornwall has since the early 1990s been at the fore-front of those academics who have engaged with inter-war Czechoslovakia and Sudeten issues. He has published much in-depth research on the development of Sudeten national movements based on extensive archival work. In "A Leap into Ice-Cold water" (Cornwall, 2007), attention was also drawn to the shortcomings of the first Republic as perceived by its nationalities, the post-1918 radical change in the ethnic hierarchy and the opposition of German society to Czechoslovakia's government. He also points to the fact that the cultural and political movements Konrad Henlein was involved with such as the Kameradschaftsbund (union of comrades) and the nationalist party, the Sudetendeutsche Partei (SdP) he founded in 1933, were initially not necessarily Nazi. However

“...from 1935, Czech tactics did much to push the SdP in a fully Pan-German and Nazi direction” (Cornwall, 2007, p.136).

The book on Heinz Rutha, already mentioned, and his mission to educate national youth (Cornwall, 2012) illustrates the issues which motivated a cohort of Sudeten German men in their nationalist struggle. Rutha, later Henlein’s unofficial foreign minister, developed an intense desire to actively shape the future of his homeland true to German ideals. The “Volkstumskampf”, the battle to maintain and further indigenous Germanness in all its aspects, was a source of inspiration for many close to Rutha and Henlein. Rutha saw his mission to ensure that young males would be educated in a targeted manner for leadership. Partly guided by Greek philosophy and history, and partly derived from Othmar Spann’s philosophy ³, he was convinced of the necessity to prepare adolescent boys for an idealistic and strong male leadership role to ensure the future of their “Stamm” (tribe). In the thirties Pan-Germanism would gain influence within the “Aufbruch” group, part of Henlein’s movement.

If one is looking for information giving an overview on the history of the Czech Republic there are a number of authors whose more recent navigation of this complex subject area has been successful in clarifying the factors underpinning the Czech narrative. Among English-language publications, Abrams (2004), Agnew (2004); Beneš and Kural (2000); and Sayer (1998) give competent assessments, while on the German side, Glotz (2007); (Franzel, 1967), and Prinz (2002) need to be mentioned, though their work might be regarded as reflecting a picture viewed through a German lens.

1.10 WAR CHILD Literature

The War Child Study of Part 2 explores the issues discussed in previous sections.

As referred to in the review of historical sources, a number of Western and Czech historians have since 1989 produced valuable work on different issues of the “transfers”, without, however, taking account of the *effects* on those affected by expulsion. This has more recently become the focus of research in a range of studies and books about German war children. As respondents had shared many experiences of the war time scenarios which affected other German war children this literature is particularly relevant within the context of this study.

³ Othmar Spann, (1878-1950), professor at the University of Vienna from 1919-1938, developed an integrationist theory of the relationship of the individual with the community, with individual aims reaching their ultimate worth only in their absorption into the higher values of a community (Carty, p. 82).

Until relatively recently German authors, historians and academics have hardly touched on the social implications of the former children's fate. Media and research interest in the subject did not start till the 1990s, prompted in the first instance by the findings of the medical profession pointing to the mental and physical damage suffered by elderly patients whose lives had been damaged by war time events. They diagnosed psychosomatic connections with what appeared to be purely physical symptoms of illnesses presented. In many cases this was not even acknowledged by patients as they had internalised or blocked memories in what is referred to as "the silence of the war children" by the historian Volker Ackermann (2004) which was not broken until after the fall of Communism. To date the most thorough and wide-ranging studies have been conducted by psychiatrists and psychologists only more recently in cooperation with social scientists and historians.

Early in the 21st century a number of works by reputable German authors of fiction started to look at the German experience of war in a new way, from the perspective of Germans who were caught up in it and had to cope with the consequences. The subject used to be a taboo and any engagement with it would quickly be labelled as being right-wing and unacceptable. However, the well known and respected author Guenther Grass engaged with the topic in his novella of 2002, *Im Krebsgang* (crab-walk). It follows a German family's flight from the East and in it he also refers to the sinking of the "Wilhelm Gustloff", a ship which carried 11,000 refugees from the Baltic provinces. His left-wing credentials suffered considerably after his work, an indictment of war, portrayed Germans as war victims. For refugees and expellees their final arrival in host areas was more often than not accompanied by rejection and further deprivation as documented in *Kalte Heimat* by Andreas Kossert (2008).

For a long time the influence of war time events on children's lives was not recognised or acknowledged as being responsible for any symptoms of trauma. If they were present it was their social environment which was to blame. This theory was proved wrong by Prof. Michael Ermann and his team, who between 2007-2009, based at the Medical Faculty of the University of Munich, produced in-depth psychological and psychiatric research on a cohort of former German war-children. It examined the long-term effects on German children under the influence of the NS time in Germany and the Second World War. It was the only research found with which certain comparisons could be made. Results of that study are shown in Part 2, the social research section of this thesis (Bauer, 2009, pp. 35-46).

A study about former war children looking back in old age was conducted by the University of Muenster (Grundmann, Hoffmeister, Heuft, & Schneider, 2010) which established that the same harrowing experiences could be perceived quite differently by different people. Two German authors, Helga Spranger (2009), a war child herself, and Peter Heintz (2001), are both psychiatrists and psychotherapists whose work has contributed to knowledge about the whole spectrum of symptoms resulting from war traumas. Both have worked closely with Dr. Martin

Parsons of Reading University whose interest in war child issues was prompted in the first instance by his PhD research into the experiences of English evacuee children. He has included summaries of a wide range of war child research in his work (2007, 2008), including aspects relevant to Scandinavian and Jewish themes. Hartmut Radebold (2009), a geriatrician and psychotherapist, also a war child, was one of the first to point to war damage in the elderly as he had noticed differences in reactions between those who had negative war time experiences and those who did not. He and Spranger identified specific problems in patients who grew up without a father or got to know him after a long absence. The historian Barbara Stambolis also researched the memories of a female generation who grew up without a father and documented gender-specific effects on them growing up within an incomplete family constellation, yearning for a male role model.

Insa Fooker and Juergen Zinnecker, (2007) examined the many factors and variables which contribute to maintaining resilience in spite of traumatic experiences, which the well known American psychologist, Emmy Werner (2001) has researched since the 1950s. Her in-depth exploration of the phenomenon of resilience is based on her longitudinal study of a cohort of under-privileged Kauai Hawaii children. She has shown that competent parenting and a functioning social infra-structure provides the safety net which makes the difference between conquering trauma or succumbing to it.

Social Capital is another feature which, when present in a society, becomes the bedrock to peoples' strength and resilience in the face of traumatic circumstances. Robert Putnam (1993, 2000) and many others since have convincingly demonstrated that if certain qualities are part of the ethos of a community, that society and the individuals within it are much more likely to be able to cope successfully with adversity. Characteristics such frequent social inter-action, close connection, mutual trust, a spirit of cooperation and reciprocity are just a few examples of protective features identified by Putnam which can become decisive forces for communities to recover from a seemingly disastrous fate. Research for this case study of Sudeten expellees from Northern Bohemia appears to prove the power of social capital in almost all aspects ascribed to it.

The journalist and broadcaster Sabine Bode (2004) called German war children a "forgotten generation", now senior citizens many of whom had experienced unimaginable horrors. Those from the East became witnesses or victims of sexual violence, suffered hunger and observed death all around them. Those from German urban areas spent night after night in cellars sheltering from bombing raids, were buried and praying to be dug out, others experienced fire-storms started by bombing raids. Bode gathered a great deal of information through interviews on how they as children coped and whether they were marked by their experiences. Many had internalised their memories or disassociated themselves from them and turned into productive and fully functioning citizens of post-war Germany. The historian Margarete Doerr (2007)

published two volumes of testimonies by 500 former war-children about their memories. They make for harrowing reading particularly about the experiences of those from the former German Baltic provinces which are now within Poland and Russia.

One of the most original studies on children in the Nazi occupied countries of Europe was written by Nicholas Stargardt. In his book, *“Witnesses of War: Children’s Lives under the Nazis”* he shows the suffering of children during the last war in a multifaceted approach based on an impressive array of sources. Whether Polish, German or Jewish, the war interrupted children’s lives in a variety of ways depending on a variety of circumstances. He writes from the perspective of the children at the time and problematises the use of such concepts as “victim”, “trauma” and “survivors”, as in his opinion, expressions denoting suffering are only one of many factors in the overall picture. His angle of approach is that children often perceived terrible events in a different and less harrowing way to adults. Looking back post-war, other children wrote in their post-war school essays how they were fascinated by the red glow of fires after bombing raids. One example is the comment of one boy experiencing the Hamburg fire storm that the resulting lighting up of the sky helped when writing letters at night (p. 233). Jo Boyden (2003) whose research has focused on present day issues affecting children during political violence and war scenarios, has found that in her experience children have their own value systems. These do not necessarily reflect those of the adults.

Conclusion

The Review on *History and Politics* in Part 1 of the study has shown how the literature on Czech- German affairs before 1989 was defined by a pronounced split along ethnic/nationalist lines affecting Czech-German historiography on Bohemia. The situation was explained as two ethnic communities divided by nationalist conflict, interpreted differently by each side since the 19th century. Influenced by the attitudes of members of the opinion-forming sections of both communities both historiographies were instrumentalised for nationalist purposes but how effectively did their message actually change attitudes within the general public in Bohemian lands?

During the last 25 years important new research, referred to in the Review has changed established clichés. Seemingly deeply rooted but contrasting Czech-German ethnic perceptions are set against research results which transcend nationalist stereotypes, introducing new aspects in the field, previously ignored. In particular, Czech and German nationalism was shown to have been just one aspect of inter-ethnic co-citizenship in Bohemia. However, convincing evidence has emerged from the newer literature by western scholars that the traditional picture of Czech and German nationalism can no longer be considered as *the* predominant feature of social and political inter-action in Bohemia. The new research findings

have produced results which show how complex variants influenced people's mind-sets within both ethnic groups. What has also become obvious is that fluidity of national identities in East Central Europe persisted after 1918, an important aspect which respondents' testimonies in this study have reinforced. Their feedback in respect of the calm and peaceful Czech-German interaction in Gablonz strengthens the validity of the more recent research results and also what has always been reported anecdotally in the "Heimat" literature of the day to day inter-ethnic behaviour within the general population in Bohemia-Moravia. Though there were politically manipulated incidences of nationalist outbursts after 1918 and before the annexation, it appears that the population as a whole did not lose its pragmatic attitude and continued as before.

In addition to closing the gap between the historiography before and after 1989, the interdisciplinary *war child study* bridges the disciplinary division between history and the social sciences with research linked by the human element common to both.

The sources underpinning the social issues investigated in Part 2 of the thesis were chosen from the domain of the social sciences. This has led to scientifically grounded research into the effects and social implications of the displacement of a group of Sudeten German war children by expulsion from their original homes in Northern Bohemia.

German respondents felt that most issues dealt with in the literature before 1989 applied rather more to the situation of the great-grandparents, grandparents and parents than to them. As they were only children, they still find the historical and political complexities preceding their expulsions perplexing and difficult to understand.

Their testimonies are much more in line with the research results from the 1990s onwards which more accurately reflects the nature of their pre-expulsion first lives than the historiography before 1989. Though their families were aware of their northern Bohemian identities, they never appeared to be racist to their children; after all, many of them had been connected to Czechs through inter-ethnic marriages going back for generations. As Gablonz industries were the source of economic prosperity for both Czechs and Germans, the importance of inter-ethnic cooperation and civic peace was clear to all. Even when there were skirmishes in other Sudeten areas during times of political stress, such as after 1918 and preceding the Annexation, these were avoided in Gablonz. Without exception respondents never perceived their pre-expulsion childhood in Gablonz and surroundings as anything other than non-racist and nationally indifferent.

Chapter 2

Methodology

2.1 Overview

The focus for this project, an interdisciplinary war child study, are the memories of a core- group of sixteen German respondents. They were born between 1933 and 1940 in the town and District of Gablonz an der Neisse/Jablonec nad Nisou in the once mainly German-speaking borderlands of Northern Bohemia, known after 1918 as Sudetenland. Parts of their testimonies were later supplemented by eight additional German respondents, also originally from the same area. All their families along with most of the rest of the indigenous German population of Czechoslovakia were expelled after the end of the Second World War, a life-defining experience for respondents, children at the time, now in their 70s to mid- 80s. To be able to compare their testimony against the Czech experience before and during their removal, contact was also made with six Czech eyewitnesses who also supplied testimonies.

The project uses memory research to investigate the experiences of former German Sudeten war children affected by expulsion from Czechoslovakia during and after 1945 as part of the research undertaken for the Centre for Evacuee and War Child Studies, University of Reading. The study not only explores the life-long effects on respondents through their testimonies but will also contribute towards our understanding of the history and politics of Central Europe as remembered by German and Czech participants of the times before, during and after the Second World War.

However they were not alone, at the time a similar fate was shared by up to 16 million Germans and others who became refugees from the East. Not only did the First World War leave millions dead, the Second World War followed with an even more appalling record of casualties and great suffering of victims all over Europe and other parts of the world. As Mark Mazower tells us in *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (p. 399), "Before 1950, more than sixty million people died in war or through state-sponsored violence ..."

The location of the town of Gablonz and the characteristics of its population were considered special for in-depth research and chosen as the focus for this study. Two factors were relevant in this respect:

1. *The unique nature of the historical, political and industrial past of the town of Gablonz and its surroundings.*

2. *The special qualities of the people of Gablonz and their community.* These were shaped in a very specific way by having been connected with the industries, working practices and way of life in Gablonz, long known before 1938 as the world's metropolis of fashion jewellery before.

Testimonies of surviving expellees from Neugablonz, the core-group of 16 German research participants were supplemented by those of a group of 8 more volunteers from Schwaebisch-Gmuend, Germany, also born in Gablonz and der Neisse/Jablonec nad Nisou. However, as the childhood memories of the German speakers only reflected how they remembered *their* history it did not include details of what life was like for non-Germans, i.e. Czech contemporaries. Through the active support and valuable help of the Cultural Office of the municipality of Jablonec 6 additional Czech respondents were eventually found. They had, as children and young adolescents, lived in Gablonz up to the time of the German transfers and beyond, and it was possible to balance the study through their testimony. However, as this project was registered as a social science study with Sudeten German war-children from Neugablonz, they are the focus referred to as the core-group. Their testimonies, the predominant source of data, are supplemented by those of the two additional groups mentioned. Altogether 30 persons cooperated in this study.

Particular human experiences are generally affected by historical contexts, in this case the painful birth of twentieth-century nation states, accompanied by nationalism, Fascism, - war, subsequent ethnic cleansing, and the rise of Communism, subjects usually dealt with separately. Instead an interdisciplinary approach was considered the optimum research approach to do justice to the task of investigating the effects of social science aspects, in this case displacement during childhood, in conjunction with historico-political events in Sudetenland/Czechoslovakia before and after 1945.

2.2 The Academic Components of the Study

Part 1 of the thesis provides an outline of history and politics preceding the expulsion of the German population from Gablonz, a town and district in the former Sudetenland. Part 2 deals with the second line of inquiry, which is based on social research concepts and attempts to gauge the effect of that history on those who lived through it.

Two main strands of research are pursued as follows:

Part 1 presents an analysis of history, politics, economics, and geopolitics as well as ethnographic aspects in respect of the German-speakers of Czechoslovakia before and after their forced removal from their homelands in western Czechoslovakia, now the Czech Republic.

Part 2 examines sociological aspects by exploring the human dimension of that history. This will allow a picture of contemporary Central European history to emerge, in part through the recollections of Sudeten German child eyewitnesses (Zeitzeugen) with aspects outside their experience covered by the written testimonies of Czech research participants.

Details of theoretical aspects and social science research components employed in Part 2 of the War Child Study can be found in the Appendix.

2.3 Memory Studies: Theoretical Aspects

Over recent decades memory studies have become a very popular medium relating to very many subjects, all looking at “Memory” in different ways and with various research targets in mind (Beiner, 2008).

“*Memory*”, a major element in this study, plays a fundamental role in life-history research and is defined as follows by Emily Keightley (2009, p. 2)

... the value of memory extends beyond its potential to confirm or establish empirical historical truths ... It is a process of making sense of experience, of constructing and navigating complex temporal narratives and structures and ascribing meaning not only to the past, but to the present and future also.

For the purposes of this study memory is defined as being the manifestation of a still inadequately understood complex function of the human brain which attempts to give the past meaning to facilitate its understanding in the present and future. Though storage of sensory information in the brain does not guarantee accurate play-back, when tapped, it can nevertheless produce information which is valuable within the context of this study.

In respect of testimony it is assumed that all respondents’ mental faculties are capable of memory recall comparable to that of the general public.

For the purpose of how the meaning of memory is understood, the definition by Professor Paul Connerton (1989, pp.1-4) is the most useful because it acknowledges recollection and accepts the selectivity and fluidity of personal memory. Its weaknesses lie in the influence of collective memory (Halbwachs, 1992), but its most obvious inherent flaw concerning accuracy is “forgetting” (Ricoeur, 2004).

Could it be that “forgetting as humiliated silence”, one of the seven different types of “forgetting”, identified by Connerton (2008, pp. 61-70), was the reason for the German

population staying silent for more than 50 years about their own war time experiences? He argues (pp. 67-70) that “forgetting as humiliated silence” might have fuelled the almost manic speed with which Germans set about rebuilding their country and creating the “economic miracle”. These arguments have been analysed and set against the findings of respondents’ testimony which, as will become apparent, do not quite conform to his theories. The German testimonies and the researcher’s experience of the years immediately following the war point in a different direction. In the first instance everything lost had to be established or produced again to facilitate progress to a tolerable existence. The German shame or guilt complex came much later and was not the initial trigger for the German recovery, an impressive example of which was the establishment of Neugablonz.

Connerton (2008) has ascribed the growing interest about the past to the devastating effects of the traumatic events which shaped the lives of people born in the early years of the last century as well as their descendants. Against a background of war, crime, victims and perpetrators (Greiter 2014, p. 27), the difficulty remains where the historian stands vis-a-vis a complex web of individual memories including “false” ones (Schacter, 1999, pp. 190-193), subconscious and conscious forgetting, amnesia, and erroneous attributions. The influence of memory cultures shaped by social frameworks also needs to be taken into account.

Problems can arise because of the fluidity of parameters and divergence on the basic concepts and methods in memory studies as well as the epistemological and causal significance ascribed to memory in the study of the formation of personal and public identity, culture, politics, and social communities.

Nevertheless, the researcher considers the merits of this project outweigh the problems highlighted above. The inter-disciplinary path including the memory research chosen for this project was particularly suitable for meeting the challenges into this multifaceted and complex subject. A number of issues highlighted in this chapter will be discussed in the concluding chapter.

.....

Following the research design passed at Transfer to PhD, the two parts of the thesis are treated separately, though they follow parallel timelines and thematic paths and references to participants’ testimonies are made throughout Part 1. However, It would not have been appropriate to integrate sections of material obtained from the testimonies in the social science part of the thesis into the introductory history and politics section of Part 1 in order to link the two.

Research methods, approach and format differ in respect of history and the social sciences. Therefore, integrating social science material with Part 1 would have led to an unacceptable mix of components such as text which would have needed to be supported by tables, lists and models, quantifications and qualifications. It would also have meant that results which are organised and categorised in Part 2 would have been anticipated too soon and in a chaotic manner.

Conclusion

This Conclusion also refers to issues in the the extension on Methodology in the Appendix.

The Sudeten German war-children, who have taken part in this study, are a group of special interest to research as they are the last link to a time before the centuries old co-existence of the Czechs and Germans of Bohemian lands was officially and abruptly terminated. The questionnaires (see Appendix) were designed to reach as many aspects of participants' experiences as possible to stimulate maximum testimony feedback on history and the emotional aspects of their displacement and their journey through life. Their cooperation was total and surpassed expectations.

For decades after the war Germans had been in denial about the fact that war child victims have existed among them, many severely affected. How did the Gablonz cohort cope with their experiences? Their statements and judgements allow insights into the circumstances of their families while still living in the Bohemian borderlands before 1945 and demonstrate how they managed their lives during times of extreme physical and psychological stress and thereafter. As later chapters will show, answers to questions on the sources for their strength and resilience have provided interesting new information on issues which have exercised war child researchers and the media not only in Germany but also world-wide.

How respondents in this study have coped to this day sheds light on some aspects of the whole spectrum of war-time experiences and human reactions to them. Some results are only relevant within the context of this study while others have more wide-ranging significance relevant in respect of victims of violent conflicts globally.

No study to date has attempted what defines this project as unique by establishing a authentic link between history, how it is remembered, and its effect on a homogeneous group of people whose lives were affected by it. Survivors of the time in question are the only persons whose authentic testimonies and knowledge can still contribute valuable information to present and future generations. This has been done in this study, just in time.

PART I

HISTORY AND POLITICS

Chapter 3

The Road to Expulsion

3.1 Sudeten issues - an overview

This chapter, starting Part 1 of the thesis, will provide an outline of the history and politics before 1945 in what used to be called the Kingdom of Bohemia, part of the Habsburg Empire until 1918 when it became the western section of Czechoslovakia. That part of Central Europe is now known as the Czech Republic.

The overview will form the backdrop to the memory study, Part 2, a war child study about a group of 16 former Sudeten German war children born between 1933-40 in and around the previously famous glass producing town of Gablonz (Jablonec nad Nisou). Expelled from Czechoslovakia along with over 3 million fellow German-speakers after the end of the last war, Bavaria became their post-war host country. In addition to the core-group a further eight ex-Gablonz Germans, now residents in Schwaebisch-Gmuend, Germany, also participated in the study, as well as six Czech survivors from Jablonec who provided additional testimony on specific issues outside the experience of the German respondents.

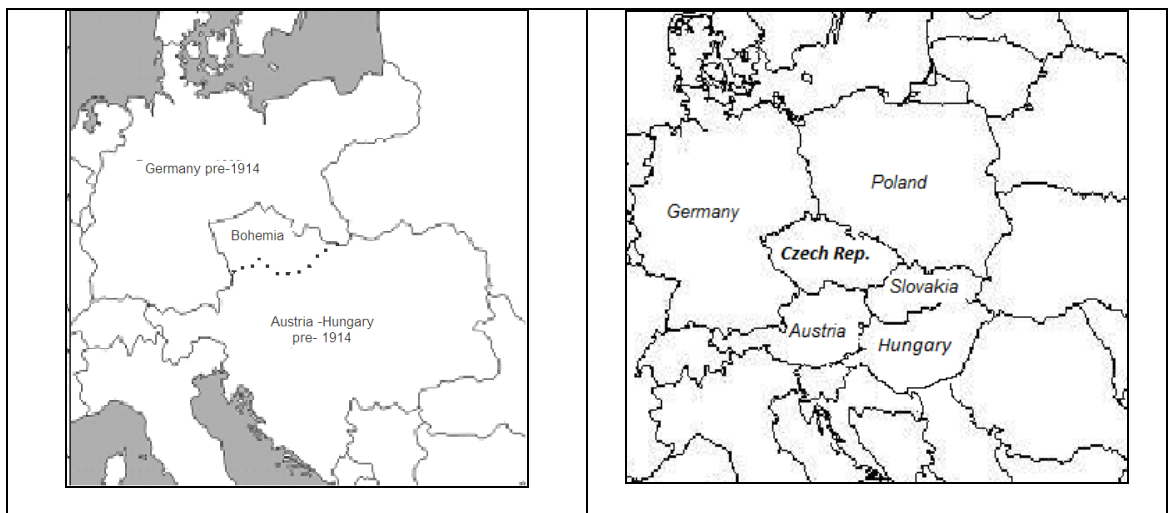
The history of the Czechs and German-speakers in Bohemia had until the middle of the 20th century been intertwined with that of its German and Austrian neighbours ever since Germans settled in the region in early medieval times (Agnew, 2004, p. 20). After the ascendancy of the Habsburgs to the Bohemian throne in 1526 the historical and political inter-ethnic relationship was further consolidated. In the aftermath of the Napoleonic wars the idea of nations becoming independent from their imperial rulers gained popularity creating political tensions, fuelled by growing nationalism. The Czechs' 19th century struggle for emancipation and independence from the pre-1918 Habsburg Empire eventually resulted in what became known as the Czech-German "Konfliktgemeinschaft", a community of conflict, (Gebel, 2000, p.16; Hoensch and Lemberg, 2001; Suppan, 2003, 2006). This term has also been used in the title of the book by the respected Czech historian Jan Křen (2000), *Die Konfliktgemeinschaft: Tschechen und Deutsche 1780-1918*. Munich: R. Oldenbourg. In it he demonstrates how Czechs and Germans were united by living in the same country but divided by different perceptions of their role in history and national and political aspirations.

Below are three maps, two of which show Central Europe (1 and 3) now while (2) represents the political situation before the end of the First World War, when the area of the present Czech Republic was known as Bohemia (short for the Kingdom of Bohemia), a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.



1. Central Europe: Location of Gablonz an der Neisse – Jablonec nad Nisou

(http://www.weltkarte.com/uploads/pics/reliefkarte_europa.jpg)



2. Central Europe pre -1914

3. Central Europe post-1993

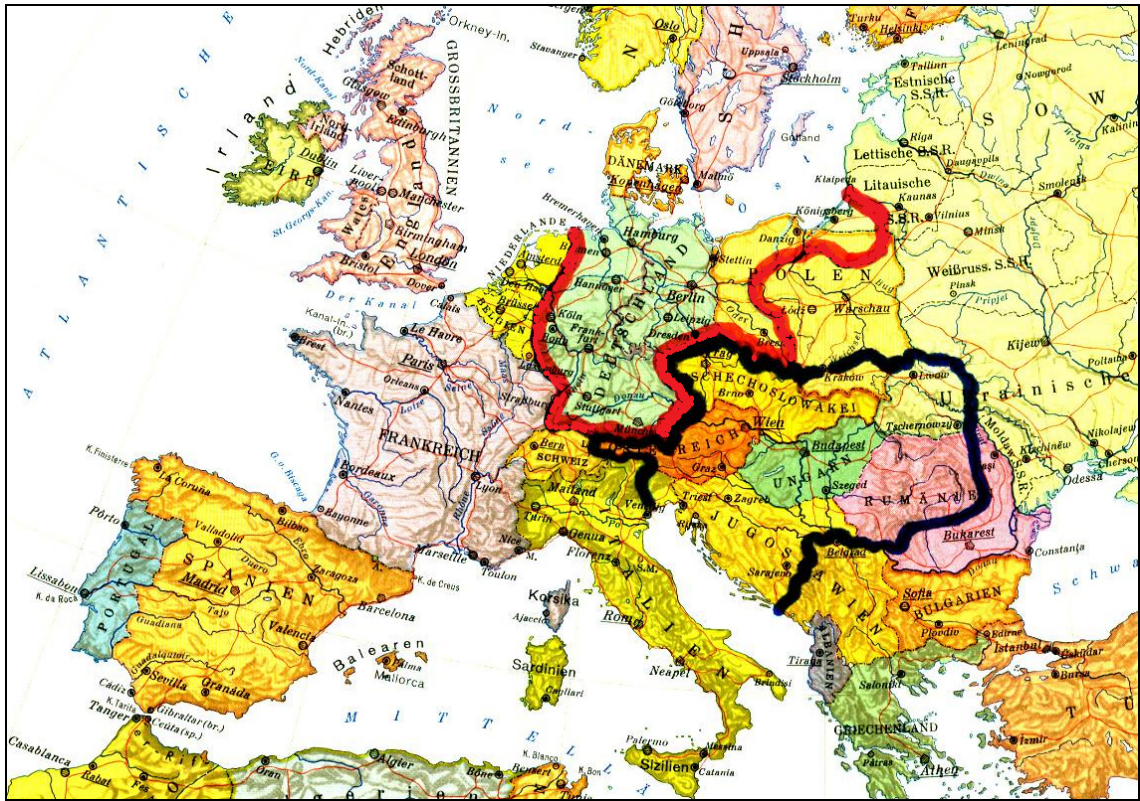
(2. http://d-maps.com/carte.php?num_car=6028&lang=en , edited, H. Lees)

(3. <http://geography.about.com/library/blank/blxeurope.htm>)

The key period of Czech-German history and politics relevant to this study covers the years just before the middle of the 19th century to the middle of the 20th century, a time of political importance as well as growing national tensions. The following sections will trace the development of the relationship between Czechs and Germans, from the time of the Kingdom of Bohemia until the end of the Habsburg Monarchy when Bohemia-Moravia merged with Slovakia to become a democracy, the Republic of Czechoslovakia (1918-1938), often referred to as the First Republic. Never an ethnically homogenous region in the past, it had now become a multi-ethnic state of Slavs, Germans, Hungarians, Jews and other ethnic groups. During the interwar years, particularly in the late 1930s rapidly increasing Czech-German frictions developed. "Munich" caused the country to be split into two parts, its northern border regions, Sudetenland, being incorporated into the Third Reich, called "Sudetengau". The remaining, mainly Czech central area became the Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia, ruled by Nazi Germany until 1945. Thereafter the country reverted to its previous state and name, the German population was expelled, and a Communist regime took over which ruled the country from 1948 until -1989. The Czech Republic was created in 1993, after the union with Slovakia was dissolved.

The multiple historical, cultural, political and economic forces finally leading to the German expulsions are analysed here to provide the context behind this major shift in the ethnic balance of Central Europe. It caused great changes in the lives of respondents' families from 1945 onwards, impacting on them physically and mentally at the time and affecting their later lives.

The removal of the former Bohemian German-speakers was not only a break in European history but resulted in many fatalities and considerable suffering for those affected. What the participants of this study remember of that history and how they were affected by it will be explored in Part 2. This should go some way towards shedding a light on those dark days in Central European history.



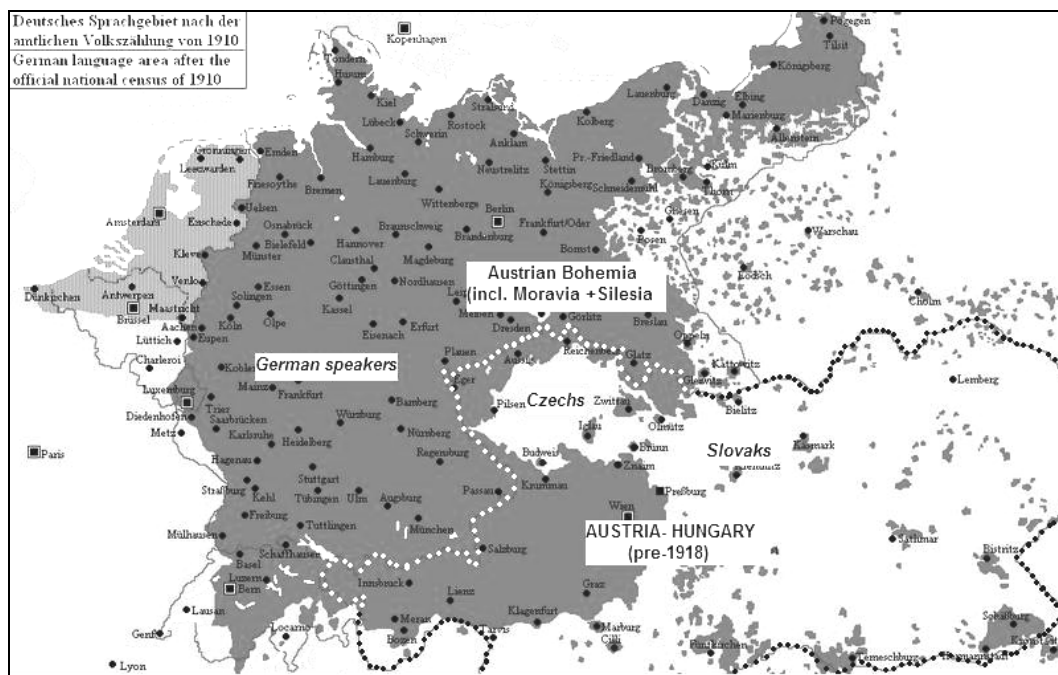
4. Empires (The political order in Europe, 1945-1989, Eckelt, 1962, p. 92-93)

Black: The Borders of the Austro-Hungarian Empire pre-1918

Red: The Borders of the German Empire pre-1918

Under the Habsburgs many different ethnic groups had coexisted in Central and Eastern Europe, but after the signing of the Treaty of St. Germain-en-Laye on 10 September 1919 multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-lingual Imperial Austria was split up having existed for many centuries. New nation states came into being through the Paris Peace Conference, supposedly taking account of the ethnic uniqueness of populations in individual regions. Czechoslovakia became one of the new Slavic successor states to the old Habsburg Empire. However, problems arose straight away as the country was not just peopled by Slavs. German-speakers were living there in large cohesive areas, where they had always had the overwhelming majority. They now found themselves having minority status and perceived themselves as being treated as such. The fact that this large minority was governed by a relatively small Slav majority became one of the main problems the new Czechoslovakia faced during the inter-war years (Zimmermann, 2002, para. 5).

The so-called “Sudeten problem” became an issue immediately after 1918 when very much against their wishes, in excess of 3 million German-speakers were incorporated into the new state. As the new borders now separated the Bohemian German-speakers from their ethnic group in Austria (Map 5), their representatives felt a plebiscite was needed to solve the problem, either granting them independence or allowing them to merge certain areas territorially with Germany and/or Austria. They had hoped that adherence to the much talked-about principle of the right for national self-determination would also apply to the German population. Set out by President Wilson of America in number 10 of his 14 points speech, he said “The peoples of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity of autonomous development” (Wilson,1918).



5. German-speakers in Europe pre-1914 (dark-grey)

(http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Historisches_deutsches_Sprachgebiet.PNG, edited and checked for accuracy in Dloczik, Schüttler, & Sternagel, 1990, p. 63).

However, at the Paris Peace Conference decisions were made which favoured the Czech request for their new country to include the German borderland regions. There, however, Germans were in the overwhelming majority over the Czechs (Map 5). Austrian representations in opposition to the proposal were disregarded. From now on inter-war Czech governments had a “German problem”. “Our Germans”, as Czech politicians tended to refer to them, “would have

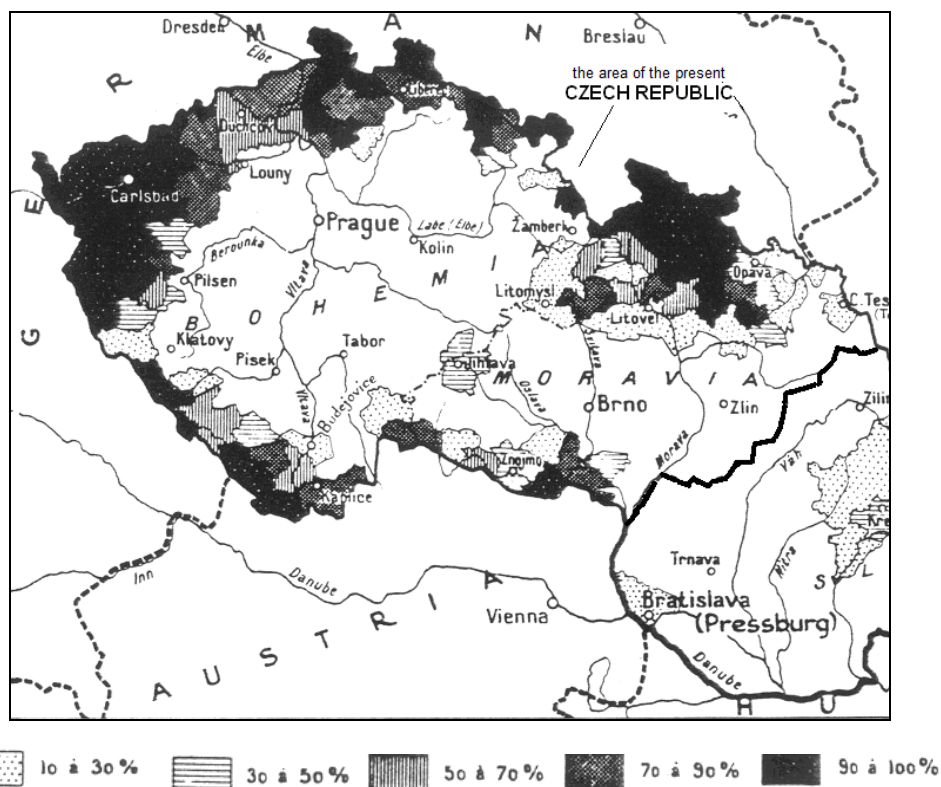
to assimilate". However, that expectation was not something the Czechs would have welcomed for themselves while part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. There institutional pluralism was being practised as has been pointed out in recent literature by Judson (2006); King (2002); Orzoff (2009); Suppanz (2011) and others.

The Germans found it difficult to accept their change of status regarding their previous cultural and social importance in the old Kingdom of Bohemia. Having been the state-bearing people in the days of the Empire (Agnew, 2004, p.199), now being ruled by a Czech government was anathema to many of them. Others were prepared to co-operate, as the population of the region had always been mixed and perceptions on nationhood had been fluid, ethnic barriers having in many cases been blurred through intermarriage. However, the German-speakers, portrayed by Czech nationalists as having pretensions of being superior soon started to regard themselves as a disadvantaged minority. Several measures to "czechify" the German borderlands were put into operation by replacing Germans with Czechs in e.g. the police-force, as post masters, in the Civil Service and state employment in general (Gebel, 2006, p. 206).. The situation was aggravated as the new arrivals, officially encouraged to take up these post in the purely German areas, often spoke little or no German.

Map 5 shows the previous borderland home-regions and language islands of the Germans (dark-grey). Post-1918 the northern regions became known as "Sudetenland" and its inhabitants as "Sudeten Germans". The Germans of Czechoslovakia, now somewhat reluctant subjects to Czech rule in what had only recently been Austrian Bohemia, were not to know then that fighting for their perceived rights would ultimately contribute to their later expulsion. Map 6 depicts the interwar German population density according to the Czechoslovak Census of 1930.

The map is the western section of a map of Czechoslovakia, cropped and enlarged to enable the reader to see the legend clearly and distinguish without difficulty between the fields showing the percentages of the German population.

According to the Czechoslovak Census of 1930 (Czech Demographic Handbook, 2009) one third of the population pre-1945 in western Czechoslovakia (the present Czech Republic) was a member of the indigenous German population, the largest minority in inter-war Czechoslovakia. Czechs were also present in the borderlands, in most districts as a minority, proportionally increasing towards the centre of the country, the Czech heartland, where they were in the majority. In the German language islands of the interior, the population was again mixed, with varying majorities in the administrative districts.



6. The percentage of Germans in Bohemia and Moravia (Czsl. Census 1930)
 (Cropped Western section of a map on of Czechoslovakia from a Czech source, Wiskemann,
 1967, p. 119)

After the end of the First World War, 7.3 million Czechs and 2 million Slovaks (Census figures 1921) combined to form the Czechoslovak government, thus securing a Slavic governing majority over 3.2 million Germans, half a million Hungarians and the other minorities: Poles, Ukrainians, Caraphian Russians, Jews and Roma. The Germans initially assumed that on account of their considerable numbers they would be included in the decision-making processes, and have a say on constitutional issues in the new democracy, but soon found out their participation in the running of the new Czechoslovak state was not to be. They felt sidelined and left out on decisions they considered crucial for their future. As the situation was not resolved to their satisfaction, increasing resentment created political tensions which twenty years later culminated in the Sudeten crisis and “Munich”. This was followed by the annexation

of Sudetenland by the Third Reich and the creation of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, when throughout the war the Czech population found itself stripped of its independence under a harsh Nazi regime. The subsequent post-1945 systematic ethnic cleansing of the German Bohemians, executed through decrees by the post-war Czechoslovak government under President Beneš, and sanctioned at the Conference of Potsdam constituted a massive demographic shift and break in the history of Central Europe.

Below are a few examples of the pre-expulsion ethnic mix of some of the major urban districts, in northern Bohemia compared to English towns with similar population figures.

Bohemian Urban Districts (Census 1930)	Germans	Czechs	English	Towns
Reichenberg (Liberec)	85 526	18 958	Exeter	106 772
Karlsbad (Karlovy Vary)	83 818	3 826	Bath	90 144
Teplitz-Schoenau (Teplice)	80 448	25 302	Cambridge	113 442
Gablonz (Jablonec nad Nisou),	61 469	10 087	Chester	80 121

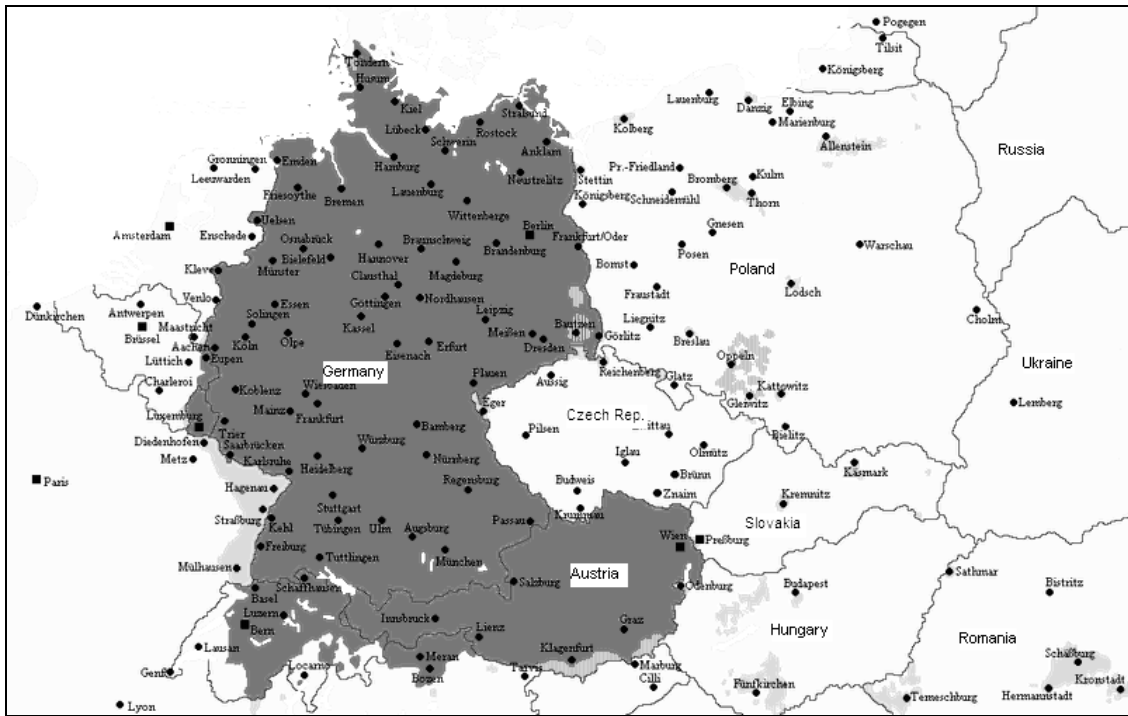
Figure 1 Pre-1945 Czech-German populations-major towns of Northern Bohemia (Meynen, 1955, pp. 7-8)

More information on the pre-war ethnic balance in Sudetenland can be gained by looking at the Czech-German population figures for all the towns above 10,000 inhabitants (Czechoslovak Census of 1930) shown on the map of judicial districts – *Gerichtsbezirke*, inside the back-cover of the thesis.

The overall number of originally indigenous Czechs in Sudetenland cannot be stated exactly but is understood to have been in the region of 200,000 in the early days of the new Czechoslovakia. That number rose to approximately 400,000 during the interwar years, many having been encouraged to settle among the Germans. After the annexation in 1938 many of those, including civil servants, teachers etc., hurriedly left Sudetenland. Of the remaining ones quite a few would subsequently opportunistically change their nationality while part of the Reich (Gebel, 2000, p. 276). Bryant (2006, pp. 4-6) writes that according to the Czechoslovak Minister of the Interior "... one in every 25 Czechs - approximately three hundred thousand people - had

been registered as citizens of the Reich before liberation [by the Russians].” On the other hand thousands of Germans in the Protectorate refused to register for Reich German citizenship.

The whole issue of the German expulsions from Czechoslovakia and Eastern Europe after 1945 is not well known or understood the countries which were affected; even there the passage of time has obscured knowledge about the facts.



7. German language areas after the mass displacement of ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe post-1945 (dark-grey)

(http://de.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Datei:Verbreitungsgebiet_der_deutschen_Sprache.PNG&filetimestamp=20100518171910 edited by H. Lees.)

Before the expulsion the Czech narrative frequently identified the Germans of Bohemia as favouring pan-German and hegemonic Reich ideology, presented by Luža as the reason for the German transfers after 1945 (Luža, 1964). Rather than German, the Austrian identity is still important to the former Sudeten German expellees, as has become clear in their testimonies to be discussed at a later stage. During the post-war Czech Germanophobia, the national myths of the supposed German oppression through the ages contributed to the Czech politicians' belief that it was impossible for both populations to continue to share the same country. This helped to underpin the political integrity and moral legitimacy of the transfers based on the principle of collective guilt.

Aware of what had been done in their name during the war, the majority of German and Austrian people kept quiet, at least publicly. Apart from familial narratives about a savage time engulfing former German homelands the subject had become untouchable until the 1990s (Rabitz, 2003). The subject of German civilian suffering became a taboo and on the surface all looked as if everyone had moved on apart from the unreconstructed German Right, which chose to ignore previous German behaviour and vociferously pursued a line of moral reckoning. But the fact remained that post-war Germans had been war victims too, caught up in traumatic events during the expulsions and the flight of up to 16 million indigenous Germans from the East after 1945, including several million children. For a long time events during that turbulent time, quite unimaginable to later generations, continued to be part of familial narratives only. However, after the fall of Communism and the Czech Republic's efforts to join the European Union, a fierce public debate on the subject started in the German, Austrian and Czech media (Suppan, 2006).

Post-war Czech historiography had been influenced for a long time by nationalist and Communist propaganda. In power from 1948 to 1989, the Czechoslovak Communist Party (KSČ) had enforced a collective Communist historiography, punishing any digression from the official line. More recently younger scholars in the Czech Republic have explored new aspects of the Czech-German narrative, and there are many encouraging signs, that a differentiated assessment of the complex factors of Sudeten issues can be achieved. Entrenched old stereotypes are still common in Czech public opinion, but with the passage of time perceptions of the "bad German" fully deserving what happened, are changing. This is also the case in Germany and Austria in respect of the "brutal Czechs", who supported their post-1945 government's vicious policies against defenceless German-speaking civilians in the name of patriotism and retribution justice.

In Germany in particular and to a lesser degree in Austria two distinct attitudes are still found in post-war generations' opinions. One is indifference, particularly on the part of the younger generation, the other, is a right wing revisionist message often proclaimed by a number of post-war politicians, aware of the electoral importance of the expellee associations. Some former expellees and their descendants have petitioned the EU through legal channels and filed claims for compensation and restitution of property in their old homeland. The fear of being swamped by claimants was the reason behind the Czech Government's hesitation before finally signing the Treaty of Lisbon on 3 November 2009, making it the first country in the EU to be granted exclusion from the anti-discrimination clause, Nr.12 in the European Charter of Human Rights (Bilefsky and Castle, 2009). Latterly though, with the original war-time eyewitnesses and expulsion victims having passed on, a progressive softening has been noticeable on all fronts. The current generation of former expellees, children during the war and now mostly in their

seventies and eighties, have largely moved on, accepting that episodes and events of the kind their families had to face are still happening globally.

3.2 Czech-German cultural and national awareness pre-1914

What was the reason for two populations inhabiting the same country for hundreds of years in relative peace, to develop differences of such magnitude that eventually one of them became the target of ethnic cleansing?

In the literature review frequent reference is made to the different historiographic interpretations of Bohemian history and how this is reflected in the national cultural memory of both Czechs and Germans. The issue will surface time and again like a thread running through the thesis. Traces of the different perceptions of the past are also found in the written and oral testimonies of both Czech and German respondents.

The differences of Bohemian Czech-German historical-political perceptions are usually explained as a consequence of the Czechs' progressive "national awakening" gradually leading to a deterioration in Czech-German relations and the development of fierce nationalism in both populations during the 19th and early 20th centuries. However, Derek Sayer (1998) argues against this explanation, which is commonly found in Czech nationalist and communist historiographies. He emphasises that the initial patriotic aim of the Czech national rebirth was originally focused *on the country of Bohemia* as a political and territorial unit, rather than on a national history centred on its people. That early patriotism was diametrically opposed to any narrowly ethnic or linguistic nationalism (Sayer, 1998, p. 57).

In the aftermath of the Enlightenment and the end of the Napoleonic wars the arts and sciences were encouraged to flourish and to be appreciated by all citizens of Bohemia irrespective of ethnicity. After the abolition of serfdom in 1781 by the Habsburg Emperor Joseph II, country folk had poured into the towns soon forming an increasingly culturally confident Czech bourgeoisie (Schuster, 2009, p. 282). Learned societies were created to bring culture to all Bohemian people. Examples were the Royal Society, and Die Gesellschaft fuer das vaterlaendische Museum in Boehmen, (The Society for the Patriotic Museum of Bohemia), founded in 1818 (Kořalka, 1993, p.40). Opening the collections and art gallery in the Sternberk palace, and similar institutions in Prague to the public, were not manifestations of a Czech national rebirth but a quest for making knowledge generally available. It was also noted at the time that there was no comprehensive history of the Czechs and Bohemia, and no complete record of antiquities or documentation of natural phenomena in respect of botany, zoology and the earth sciences. To fill that gap, the National Museum was created to contain collections of old manuscripts, maps, minerals, fossils and records of discoveries generally. A number of German

Bohemian aristocrats, many aware of joint German-Slav ancestral links, provided financial support which led to Czech-German cooperation during the early years of the Bohemian cultural surge (Kořalka, 1993, p. 38). It was not considered a contradiction that for the most part its proponents spoke, read and wrote only German and French (Sayer, 1998, pp. 53-62).

František Palacký (1798-1876), later regarded and revered as the father of the modern Czech nation, “otek národa”, was much involved in the project of the National Museum and other cultural endeavours (Sayer, 1998, p. 76). In the 1820s he was for a time librarian to the Counts of Sternberk, whose Prague palace was the centre of a patriotic Bohemian German aristocracy which patronised the Bohemian domestic arts and sciences with great dedication and financial support. The Bohemian German aristocracy's show of joint Czech-German patriotism was not just altruism but a strategy to gain greater independence from the centralist Habsburg Government in Vienna.

Before long a conflict arose as to *whose* culture was being promoted, and Palacký, a respected and learned man, thought the Czech language, literature and Czech national idea was not given enough attention in scholarly projects undertaken (Cornis-Pope, & Neubauer, 2010, pp.195-196). Gradually, and in spite of protests by those involved who wished to preserve national neutrality, what had started as a cultural endeavour originally supported financially by the Bohemian German aristocracy gained a Slav agenda, covering aspects of interest rather more important to the Czech than to German citizens.

The spirit of the Romantic era had generated aspirations of nationhood among the peoples of the Habsburg Monarchy as the relationship with one's homeland started to come into focus. Exactly which philosophical concepts could define one's “homeland” while at the same time part of an imperial unit, was the subject of the works of Bernhard Bolzano (1781 –1848) (Sayer, 1999, p. 59). Soon the national spirit expressed in the works of Palacký and like-minded members of a circle around him were to have a positive impact on Czech national self-confidence. Josef Jungmann (1773-1847), a poet and linguist, had written a number of articles between 1806 and 1813 advocating a new understanding of “nation” as being connected to language. Therefore a true patriot should use Czech only in all his intellectual and cultural activities (Agnew, 2004, p. 112). At the time all schools beyond primary level taught German, therefore few members of the Czech intelligentsia, “... born before 1850, would have been altogether at home with the language which they wished to reclaim as their own” (Sayer, 1998, p.108). Soon great efforts would be made to resurrect the Czech language and to make it into a usable medium.

In the 1830s and 40s the influence of Palacký became an important force in the Czech national revival, primarily as the Czech historian and protagonist of everything connected with bringing Czech literature and culture to the fore. In 1836 he began writing his *Geschichte von Boehmen. Grösstentheils nach Urkunden und Handschriften*, written in German before using Czech in

later volumes (Palacký, 1836-1867, II/1, pp. 75-76). In it he stated that “Bohemia and Moravia are both to be considered in national terms as one population, and politically as a state” (Kořalka, 1993, p. 40). Romantic nationalism, which influenced Palacký’s idea of what constituted and legitimised nationhood, was seen as the organic outcome for populations united by language, race, culture, religion and customs. This, however, did not apply to Bohemia as it was the home of two major nationalities and many others besides, including the Jews.

Palacký originally advocated Czech autonomy within a strong Austrian Empire as small future independent nations were the best protection against German and Russian political power. His opinion at the time is encapsulated in one poignant sentence in his famous open letter to the German Parliamentary Assembly in Frankfurt (11 April, 1848) in words to the effect that if the Austrian Empire did not exist, it would have to be invented. He also declined the invitation to attend the meeting on the grounds that as a Bohemian Czech Slav it would be inappropriate to cooperate with an assembly wishing to unite the German states (Palacký, 1866, pp.79-86). The Kingdom of Bohemia had always had an important position within that group as part of the Holy Roman Empire.

He presided over the first Pan-Slav Congress at Prague, which itself was eclipsed by the revolution of 1848 (Agnew, 2004, pp.119-121) when Palacký took a leading role in the Czech uprising. He set out his own ideas for a federal Austrian state but soon noted that the Austrian Government’s promise for governmental change was just projecting the spirit of reform, without actually allowing it (Palacký, 1866, pp. 37-40). However, as the liberal and nationalist uprisings in the Austrian Empire were suppressed and centralism based in Vienna became dominant, Palacký was banned from all of his public activities, except his post as the historian of the Bohemian estates. In addition he and fellow nationalists were constantly spied on by the Austrian secret police. He wrote to a friend apologising for writing only infrequently, expressing his rage at being “sniffed at” (Goldstein, 2013 pp. 70-71), hinting at the practice of mail interception. Designed to prevent dissent this was common in every major European country between 1815 and 1860, but more so in Austria and Russia. Palacký’s disillusionment about Austria’s attitude towards its nationalities and the Czechs in particular resulted in his withdrawal from politics. His dissatisfaction with the Monarchy was added to when Austria-Hungary was created in 1867, seemingly ignoring Czech wishes for autonomy. After the introduction of more Austrian centralist policies (1867) Czech independence became his priority, visualising the Czech nation as a future bearer of democratic ideals. His influence on Czech public opinion generally and on the thinking of later national leaders, such as Thomas G. Masaryk, was enormous.

In parallel with the re-emergence of the Czech language as a cultural medium, the interpretation of Czech folk culture, history and literature gained increasingly national-political

characteristics. Palacký's portrayal of the relationship between Czechs and Germans in pre-Habsburg times and subsequently under the Habsburgs became successively more negative in respect of the Germans. The Czech historian and university professor Jiří Koralka (2007, p. 469) writes how, as time went by, Palacký described the Germans as having inflicted more harm to the Czechs than other conquerors and emphasised year after year in various publications that the Hussite movement was just a cover for a Czech national revolution against their oppressors, instead of acknowledging that it was primarily a religious struggle. This considerably influenced the self-image of the Czechs, many of whom began to see the fate of the Czech people through the ages as that of victims whose destiny it was to assert their own importance vis-a-vis the Germans. A noticeable divergence was developing between the Czech and German national consciousnesses and historiographic perceptions in respect of their past and future role in Bohemia, first carried by the Czech and German intelligentsia before gradually spreading and radicalising certain groups within Bohemian society. However, as is shown in the newer literature, previously referred to, many members of the general public continued their tradition of national indifference.

During his life-time Palacký's views on the destiny of the Czech and Slovak people were met with considerable approval, but also indifference by the nationally neutral who remained loyal to the Empire. From the second half of the 19th century members of the Czech social and political elite, by then mainly from the growing bourgeoisie, were aiming for a national status equal to the Germans of Bohemia, after all, they were the majority population in the large cities and central regions. According to the Austrian Census of 1880 and 1890 the Germans accounted for over 37% of the population in Bohemia and 29% in Moravia and were the majority in Czech Silesia (Kořalka, 1993, p. 38). All along the burgeoning Czech national consciousness had also given rise to ambitions for empowerment against their fellow-citizens, the Bohemian Germans, by claiming "state-rights" over the whole country, including the German inhabited borderlands, up to the historical borders of the Kingdom of Bohemia.

Palacký in his many German publications deliberately linked the terms "Boehmen" (Bohemians) and "bohmisch" (Bohemian, adjective) to mean Češi (Czechs) and český (Czech, adjective). As Bohemians rather than Czechs they could claim to be heirs and successors to the once mighty and influential Kingdom of Bohemia rather than to be "... potentially mistaken for just a small Slav ethnic group which had only developed in terms of language and literature since the 18th century" (Kořalka, 1993, p. 41).

Palacký's monumental work, *The History of the Czech Nation in Bohemia and Moravia*, already mentioned above, was a massively authoritative work, but in the words of Sayer (1998, p. 128), "... certainly not scholarship for its own sake." His legacy cast a long shadow over Central

European affairs, the image of the German as “the eternal enemy” being one of pretext of many behind the German expulsions from their homelands in 1945 (Schuster, 2009, p. 265).

According to Peter C. A. Morée (2002, pp. 295-308), Associate Professor at the Protestant Theological Faculty, Charles University, Prague

Palacký's main work was first published in German; the first Czech edition appeared between 1848 and 1867, in a version clearly different from the German one. The introduction, in particular, had been changed and where the, now famous passage, about the “continual association and conflict of Slavdom with Romandom and Germandom” occurred. The text was also altered in other parts, making it clearly a manifesto of Palacký's concept of the history of the Czech nation, of which Jan Hus was the climax and symbol. Compared to the Czech version the German version kept more distance from a nationalist interpretation of Czech history.

His work had become homage to his beloved Czech nation, his people, showing them their place in history vis-a-vis the Germans. It was to become the most powerful instrument in the development of Czech national consciousness vis-a-vis the Germans. Their wish for a country of their own had become a logical progression from Palacký's portrayal of the elevated status of the Czechs in Bohemian history.

The reaction of the German Bohemian intelligentsia to the picture painted in respect of their past relationship with the Czechs was anything but positive. The Germans did not agree with the way Bohemian history was interpreted and presented to the Czechs as a constant struggle between Germans and Slavs, implanting a biased hostile image of “the Germans” into the minds of the Czechs. Instead the indigenous Germans saw the Bohemian past as part of Czech history as well as their own being that of the Holy Roman Empire, a loose confederation of German states headed by a Habsburg Emperor. Though the Crownland of Bohemia was part of a German-Austrian governed entity, the German-speakers' interpretation as explained by the Austrian professor of history Werner Suppanz (2011, p. 77), was the opposite of the Czech nationalists' concept. They considered the Habsburg Empire's supranational role as a benign force on account of the ethnic, linguistic and cultural plurality of all nationalities within its boundaries.

Increasingly strident German nationalism would soon compete with Czech ambitions resulting in a worsening political atmosphere during the last decades before 1914 with the Habsburg regime forced to introduce political measures partially to prevent its powers from being eroded and to pacify the nationalists.

The interpretation of the Bohemian past in Palacký's historical works, though not overtly anti-Habsburg, was nevertheless transformed into the bedrock of the legitimisation for the Czech national movement and its battle against Habsburg rule in the late 19th and early 20th century.

As so often "History" had become a political instrument, to be used to verify or underwrite political arguments. In a contribution to a symposium of the Collegium Carolinum, historian and political scientist Professor Manfred Alexander (1984, pp. 211-216) summarised it thus:

... Czechs and Germans followed the same patterns. The Czechs' reaching back to Hus to legitimise their national struggle became almost a substitute for religion, which created a near sacred atmosphere reinforced in the use of symbolism and rituals which reached a climax in the activities of the legionnaire associations of the First Republic.

3.3 Bohemian Identity - Nationalism – National Indifference

Before 1914 the Czech wish for their own nation-state became the dominant source of political contention with the Habsburg Government in Vienna. Intense Czech activism caused confrontations in parliament with Czech delegates frequently obstructing business in the "Reichsrat". Throughout the period preceding the First World War, the debating chamber became a multi-national, multi-lingual battle-ground about national issues, compromising the efficiency of the Government in Vienna as parliament had to be suspended. The Czechs' cultural, economic, and political achievements were impressive, while part of the Habsburg monarchy, however, "... their political parties had more experience in parliamentary obstruction than in responsible government; ..." (Agnew, 2004, p. 175).

The Germans found it difficult to see matters the Czech way. In their opinion the Czechs had their schools, their university, their theatres, their officials and even their ministers. They also considered Czech interests were powerfully represented in the new reformed Reichsrat (1907) and by a majority in the Bohemian and Moravian Diets (Wiskemann, 1967, p. 60). This, however, was permanently obstructed by the Germans from 1908 onwards and ceased to function during the war years (Agnew, 2004, p. 191).

Throughout the latter part of the 19th century Habsburg reforms to solve its multinational problems could never satisfy all demands. Instead, they seemed to achieve the opposite to what they expected to deliver, to provide more equable conditions between the German-speakers and the nationalities within the Empire.

One example was the law conferring equal language rights for use in schools, courts and the local administration in any district with a minority population higher than 20% (Wiskemann,

1967, p. 52). In Bohemia there followed an increase in the provision of Czech in schools. While few Bohemian high schools taught Czech in the 1860s, twice as many taught in Czech than in German by 1890 (Orzoff, 2009, p. 26). By 1912 the proportion of Czech secondary schools corresponded to the proportion of Czechs in the total population (Agnew, 2004, p. 157). With the Czechs in charge of their own schools and education increasingly conducted in Czech the spread of their nationalists' narrative became possible. According to that the Bohemian Germans had entered "their" country as robbers, immigrants and colonisers, reinforcing Czech perceived victim status under the dominance of the Austrian German-speakers. The failure to appease the Czechs' feelings of inequality resulted in the Czech narrative soon to be accepted as the truth by some sections of the population, even though the general public remained fairly apathetic.

For the Bohemian Germans the interpretation of what was also their history was considered untrue and a provocation. They had always argued their presence went back to the dawn of time. After all, there were neither definitive frontiers when the borderlands were settled, nor could the proportion of each ethnic group be judged with any certainty in relation to those far off days. Studies of place names, town charters etc. referred to by the German historian Wilhelm Wostry (1922, 1943), professor of Bohemian history at Prague University from 1922, seemed to indicate evidence of the early presence of German-speakers in some disputed areas. Wostry was considered a moderate and did not empathise with interpretations of Czech-German ethnic conflict in Bohemian history (Konrád, 2011, *Neuerscheinungen zur Deutschen Prager Universität (1918-1945) und zur Reichsuniversität Posen (1941-1945)*, p. 626). The Bohemian Germans appear to have been at the Czech-German language interface where settlement areas tended to fluctuate back and forth.

After the reforms of Joseph II at the end of the 18th century Czech-speaking country-folk began to seek work in increasing numbers in towns and the developing industrial areas traditionally inhabited by German majorities (Schuster, 2009, p. 282). As the Czech influx into German areas continued, previously German-speaking municipalities became demographically more Czech. Czech-speaking peasants became city dwellers, and their lives started to be influenced by modernisation and everyday cultural experiences, turning them into a bourgeois society (Orzoff, 2009, p. 26).

Well before the First World War, the movement of Pan-Slavism had started to gain ground, while Pan-Germanism and ideas round the creation of a Greater Germany had also evolved in the Austrian German-speaking areas. This was a reaction to the fear of being outnumbered electorally by the much more numerous Slavs of the Empire.

Where a German ethnic majority existed, being outnumbered by Slavs was perceived as a constant political problem. To avoid destabilisation, Germans directed their efforts towards preventing any Czech minority attempting to reach the magic 20% which would have conferred greater civic rights. The struggle to maintain majority language rights and hold on to the so-called Language Borders became a central issue intensifying the political rivalry between Bohemian Germans and Czechs. Cornwall (1994, pp. 939-940) provides an interesting example of the role of language borders in Stříbro (Mies), a town in the Plzeň (Pilsen) region of the Czech Republic, illustrating conflicting interests important to both ethnic groups. Majorities in any locality would generally always seek to preserve their position vis-a-vis the minorities.

Against a background of growing nationalism Czech and German societies, initially formed to protect their ethnic culture and language, soon developed nationalist priorities. The Czechs founded their first Sokol association in 1862 (Glutz, 2004, p. 66), described by Katherine Albrecht in Cornwall and Evans (2007, p. 102) as a Defence Association. Other Czech national protection societies were the 'Národní jednota severočeská' and the 'Národní jednota pošumavská', founded in 1885 and 1884 respectively (Beneš, & Kural, 2000, p. 32). These associations became instrumental in spreading the message of having to recover the areas up to the borders for the Czechs (Wiskemann, 1967, p. 123).

The Germans on the other hand passionately believed in their intrinsic, unquestionable right to the borderlands, which they considered their ancestral homelands. Worrying about eventually being outnumbered in their majority areas, and the German language dying out in mixed locations, they started to make great efforts to preserve their ethnographic position. They feared and resented the Czechs' desire to claim what they believed to be German areas.

Given that Czech Nationalists labelled German-speakers as foreign intruders, 'cizozemei' (Andree, 1870, p. 66), it was German bourgeois conservative parties and German nationalists (Prinz, 2002, p. 377) rather than the Social Democrats who tried hard to maintain the German demographic and cultural advantage. German patriotic protective associations (Schutzgesellschaften) were founded to represent the nationalist goals and to safeguard their territory, culture and language. The Turnverein (Gymnastics Association), Schulverein (Schools Association), and Bund der Deutschen (Federation of Germans), established in 1860, 1880 and 1894 respectively are mentioned by Wiskemann (1967, p. 54). As the battle over municipal and language rights became steadily more intense, these movements not only afforded their members protection, but provided fertile ground for nationalist indoctrination, contention and distortion in the interpretation of history, supplying tinder for incidences of brawls and clashes. These associations had a crucial role in the later radicalisation of whole sections of both ethnic groups, feeding on prejudices and leading to many years of contention, pressures and counterpressures. Their messages filtered through into the troubled pre-war years, culminating in 1938,

when there were incidents of violence between German nationalists, anti-Fascists and Communists prior to the Annexation of the Sudetenland. Research by Volker Zimmerman (1999); Joerg Osterloh (2006), and Detlef Brandes (2009) has done much to help understand the tensions of that particular period.

However, as will be seen, this study demonstrates that contrary to what historians believe to have been the turbulent, defining events for that time in Sudetenland, research participants' testimony demonstrates that peaceful inter-ethnic coexistence continued in their home town of Gablonz and its surroundings.

From the 1880s Sprachgrenzen (language frontiers) in ethnically mixed locations became important in a political and nationalist sense (Cornwall, 1994, pp. 914-951). Before that time they had only been used as geographic or linguistic indicators, as was the case in the book, *Sprachgrenzen*, (1870) by Richard Andree, an Austrian geographer. However, while quite dispassionately describing the locations and geographical positions of these frontiers, he briefly mentions the increasing intensity of Czech nationalism, as if astonished, and how the battle of the nationalities in Bohemia was getting ever fiercer with no agreeable way of getting along in sight. In a nod towards Pan-Germanism he adds soothingly that the German-speakers would always have the knowledge of being close to their German kinsfolk just over the border. Also for the German Bohemians there was the re-assuring awareness of their cohesion with the great Habsburg ruled mother-nation of Austria, of which Bohemia was the outer, though fragmented margin, adjoining Bavaria, Saxony, Silesia and (Andree, 1870, pp. 66-67).

According to the specialist on Czech-German history, Mark Cornwall (1994, p. 916) "... the idea of an almost concrete language frontier running through Czech lands was for decades ... a part of many Czechs' and Sudeten Germans' active consciousness". Increasingly German nationalists' efforts were directed towards trying to maintain these borders while taking a variety of measures to stop "Czechness" undermining the demographic and cultural status quo in the German areas (Cornwall, 1994, 1997).

In the opinion of Pieter Judson (2001, 2006), an American expert on pre-1914 nationality issues in Central Europe, language borders were constructs, imaginary boundaries, never real places or actual frontiers, though cartography and census results allowed a physical representation of them (Judson 2001, pp. 163-173). However, they constituted a focus for the hopes of nationalists as well as their anxieties and suited the agenda of radical nationalist politicians. As fluidity of identity and nationality continued to persist, even between 1918 and 1945, many people would display nationally opportunistic behaviours on a day to day basis to suit their circumstances.

During Habsburg times the Czech and German peasantry in particular routinely sent their children to different schools to become fluent in both languages. Among the intelligentsia some families were not able to decide whether they were Czech or German (Judson, 2006, p. 230).

Tara Zahra (2008, pp. 1-2) wrote about the exchanges of Bohemian children even between the wars, particularly lower down the social scale as people could not afford the expense of schools. A number of German participants in this study remarked how their grandparents enjoyed the exchanges and looked upon their temporary foster parents as parent substitutes with whom they had a lifelong connection.

Of the roughly 6.8 million Czechs in Bohemia, (Austrian Census 1910) some, particularly members of the intelligentsia influenced by political agitation, were convinced that they had always been treated as second-class citizens in Habsburg times. Not only did they feel disadvantaged vis-a-vis the German speakers in what they regarded as their country, but also in comparison with the 10 million Hungarians within the Empire totalling 51 million people after the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary was created in 1867. German supremacy and the inferior status of Slavs as described by Wiskemann, (1967, p. 30) is often mentioned in the literature reflecting Czech nationalists' opinion. The German nationalists on the other hand, regarded their status as a result of their centuries-old importance in administrative, cultural, political and military matters in Bohemia and the rest of the Habsburg Empire.

Before 1918 a significant number of upwardly mobile Czech families, mostly bi-lingual, had always been happy to enter themselves as German speakers on official forms. This applied to the time of the Austrian census of 1910 and preceding decades when the language of daily use was the deciding factor to gauge the composition of the population. After 1918, Czech nationalist politicians were convinced that their fellow countrymen, who had previously opportunistically declared themselves as Germans, would be proud to be Czech citizens of the new Czechoslovakia. However, the first Czechoslovak elections of 1920 showed the proportion of German speakers registered was again about the same as before, a source of embarrassment for the new government (Wiskemann, 1967, p. 122) which had expected a surge of people coming out as Czechs.

Contrary to nationalist narratives, many Czechs had been loyal to Old Austria and regretted the passing of the Empire. Vienna was always full of every nationality, including large numbers of Czechs; they numbered 80,000 at the time of the Peace Treaty of Saint-Germain, with approximately 50,000 being Austrian citizens (Suppan, 2006, p.10); their descendents are still there to this day, as is obvious from Viennese surnames such as Cerny, Novak, Moravec, etc. The time-span when very little separated both countries and its people is still less than a hundred years. Many Czechs became important members of the intelligentsia, in the arts and music world of old Austria, as well as leading academics and high-level civil servants in the

ministries of both Prague and Vienna. But above all, Czechs were renowned and appreciated as skilled craftsmen and able workers, who were instrumental in the construction and expansion of post 1850 Vienna, when the size of the city trebled. As current phone-books in Vienna show considerations of nationality did not seem to have influenced attitudes to mixed marriages, as Slavonic and German names are represented in a more or less equal measure. This fact also became apparent in respondents' information as some of their family names turned out to be Slavic.

3.4 The triumphal creation of a new Czech State

After the defeat of the Central Powers had ended the First World War in 1918, the Paris Peace Treaties helped to establish successor states to the Habsburg Empire. Worldwide, Versailles had given "... sixty million people a state of their own, but it turned another twenty-five million into minorities" (Mazower, 2000, p. 41).

Borders were re-drawn, supposedly based on the lines of national divisions, and after the Treaty of St. Germain was signed on 9 October 1919 the fate of the German Bohemian borderlands was sealed: they were now officially part of Czechoslovakia.

The Czech delegation had managed to convince the Allied delegates of the validity of their territorial claims including the German Bohemian homelands, soon to be known as Sudetenland. Dr. Edvard Beneš (1884-1948) was largely responsible for the success of the Czech delegation's claim. In addition to having avoided the tricky subject of Czech, German and Austrian boundary issues through the use of maps showing the Czech version of where Germans lived, he minimised the actual numbers of Bohemian German-speakers to about 1.5 million. Despite Beneš having branded the numbers produced by the Austrian delegation as a falsification of the statistics, the census figures of 1921 proved there were in excess of 3 million German-speakers living in the new country (Habel, pp. 245-246). Dr. Beneš became the first Foreign Minister of Czechoslovakia after 1918 and succeeded T. G. Masaryk as President of Czechoslovakia in 1935.

The First World War ended on 11 November 1918 after the defeat of the Central Powers. As a result the Habsburg Empire had passed into history. The new state of Czechoslovakia was proclaimed on 28 October, 1918 to the immense delight of cheering crowds in the centre of Prague. Two days later on October 30, 1918, the provisional national assembly in Vienna appealed for help to President Woodrow Wilson on behalf of the German Bohemians warning that peace could not be expected to last under the circumstances created (Suppan, 2006, pp.8-9).

The subsequent attempt to create the The Republic of German Austria on 12 November 1918 in the Vienna Parliament (claiming the German majority areas in Bohemia) was doomed to failure from the start. The German-Bohemian provinces of Deutschböhmen, Sudetenland, Böhmerwaldgau, and Südmähren, which according to Wiskeman (1967, p.118) would effectively have been governed by a "... supra-national regime with a German complexion ..." never materialised.

The German-speaking Bohemians, up to then linked by their ancestral roots to the Kingdom of Bohemia, a Crown-land of Austria-Hungary, were very disappointed to have become inhabitants of a state which considered them foreign intruders. To their dismay the first President of Czechoslovakia, Thomas Masaryk re-enforced that image by using the cliché of the German colonisers and foreigners in his first speech to Parliament after the proclamation of the new state on 28 October, 1918. He stated "We have created our State, and that will determine the political status of our Germans, who originally came into the country as emigrants [sic] and colonists" (Wiskemann, 1967, pp.122-123).

3.5 Czechoslovakia's economic inheritance after 1918

Most of the industrial capacity of Imperial Austria was now located within the new borders of Czechoslovakia, including the heavily industrialised German borderlands.

The new country had gained 75% of the Empire's heavy industries, glass, shoe, and cotton production, 90% of linen weaving, and 90-100% of the sugar and malt production. The considerable china and glass industries as well the chemical industry located in the Northern Bohemian German areas and more than 40 percent of all distilleries and breweries were within the new boundaries. The Škoda works of Pilsen (Plzeň) (Kosta 1993, pp.63-91), as well as factories involved in the production of armaments, locomotive, automobile and machinery were also now part of Czechoslovakia. A high density of mostly light industry was based in Sudetenland mostly under German ownership. At the time Czechs controlled 20 to 30 percent of all industry in Czechoslovakia the rest being under German ownership.

From now on Czechs were encouraged to settle in the German borderlands. Between 1918 and 1938 the Czech population grew from approximately 180,000 - 200,000 "Alttschechen" (original Czechs) to an estimated 400,000 (Gebel, p. 276). Consequently majorities in predominately German municipalities started to come under stress.

The Germans were immensely bitter as they had expected the principle of national self-determination considered appropriate for the Slav regions to be applied to their majority areas.

However that right had not been granted and 3.2 million compatriots in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia had been forced into being part of a Czechoslovak National State in which the national population had only got the majority because 6.8 million Czechs and 2 million Slovaks were counted as one people (Habel, 2005, pp.10-11; Wiskemann, 1967; Plaschke and Suppan in Hrabovec, 1995; Glotz 2004, pp. 99-100).

Though Slavs, Czechs and Slovaks have never felt as one people, as will be shown by their very different political choices later on, the Slovaks soon resented the role of being the bolt-on junior partner of the union. In March 1939, Slovakia, not unwillingly, became a separate state under the umbrella of Nazi Germany; after 1945 the country was incorporated into Czechoslovakia again until it finally split off to become the Slovak Republic in 1993.

Bohemian German conservative political representatives had from the beginning not responded positively to Czech suggestions to cooperate as it was to be under their overall leadership, even over the German regions. They still clung to the principle of self-determination and potential autonomy in those areas. In the end the negotiations proved abortive and the Czechs went ahead with drafting their own constitution without offering the Germans a meaningful chance to participate.

From then onwards this would provide a powerful argument for the Germans in respect of their unfair treatment at the hands of the Czechs. Though a minority, the Germans were more numerous by over one million than the Slovaks who, unlike their own ethnic group, would be able to participate in all decision-making processes. Time and again Masaryk's speech about the German "colonists", the constitution, adopted in February 1920, followed by a number of unpopular laws and a somewhat anti-German attitude by nationalist Czechs would all later be quoted by Sudeten leaders as the triggers for Sudeten dissatisfaction.

After the proclamation of the new state, anti-German incidents occurred in Prague, while the police remained inactive. Prague Germans and Jews were attacked, German-language signs and street-names were torn down, as was the large double-headed Imperial eagle from the front of the main post office. Austrian flags were torched and other symbols of the Habsburgs vandalised. However, Czech politicians and certain sections of the press condemned these actions, stating that they were the result of extreme emotions after the successful creation of the new country. In the autumn of 1919 anti-German demonstrations again erupted across Bohemia, and bonfires were constructed of Imperial portraits, busts, signs with German inscriptions, generally anything reminiscent of the Habsburg past (King, 2002, pp.154-163). It was a time of iconoclasm against anything which was a reminder of old Austria. Statues of Habsburg Emperors were attacked, particularly those of Joseph II, revered by the Bohemian Germans as a symbol of the enlightenment and progress. Much to German disgust they were frequently plunged head first into public lavatories or covered with human excrement (Wingfield,

2007, pp. 136-165). While in Prague the pattern of pre-war Czech nationalists' attacks on Germans continued, in the country ritualised destruction was orchestrated by legionnaires and the newly established local Czech National Committees. Inevitably the Germans retaliated adding to the ugly manifestations of communal strife. All this took place at a time when the young Republic was faced with intense economic, political and social struggles. According to Wiskemann (1967, p. 125) in "1919 and 1920 anti-German or anti-Czech demonstrations could happen at any day" but " ... from 1921 to 1925 the peoples of Czechoslovakia rubbed along somehow." She writes of the enormous adjustments which had to be made by the population of the new state.

However, even before the official signing of the Treaty of St. Germain, the "Sudeten Germans", as they became known from 1918, had to accept the agreement of the Allies to the Czechs' military occupation of their lands during the winter and spring of 1918/19. On 4 March 1919, the day the Austrian constituent assembly met, peaceful demonstrations in favour of the right to self-determination were called by the Sudeten Social Democrats. The Czech military and police moved against the demonstrators leaving 54 unarmed Germans killed and 84 persons wounded in seven cities across Bohemia and Moravia. Subsequent Austrian and Sudeten German protest notes and memoranda produced no results (Suppan, 2006, p. 9). This serious incident, firmly lodged in Sudeten collective memories, provided the first martyrs to the Sudeten German cause.

3.6 The new order in Central Europe - geopolitical and ethnic factors

Never an ethnically homogenous region in the past, the new country of Czechoslovakia was now a multi-national construct of Slavs, Germans and Hungarians, Jews and other ethnic groups.

The Germans felt disappointed and on the defensive, which is why they soon grew into one like-minded body, known as "Sudetendeutsche", though originally they had been different groups with different identities and distinctive characteristics depending on geographical location. The name "Sudeten" as a collective term for the Germans of post-1918 Czechoslovakia is derived from the Sudeten Mountains in the north-eastern part of the Czech Republic. The term appeared from the 19th century onwards in a geographical and statistical context only, and could be found in the literature about the regions and peoples of the Monarchy. The name became the term used to distinguish the German inhabitants of Bohemia, Moravia and Austrian Silesia from other German populations of the Empire, such as the Alpine Germans, the Carpathian Germans etc. It appears to have been coined in 1803 in a book about the "Riesengebirge" (giant mountains) by J.K.E. Hosner (Wien) where he refers to the "Sudetenbewohner" (Sudeten inhabitants), as those living in the area in and around the

Sudeten mountain range. In 1826 the term “Sudetenlaender” (Sudeten countries) is found in a statistical study by G. N. Schnabel, *Ueber Raum-und Bevoelkerungs-verhaeltnisse der oesterreichischen Laender* (Prague). Throughout the second half of the 19th century the term was occasionally used in scientific literature, its use becoming more frequent during Czech-German debates in the Reichsrat towards the end of the century and until 1914 (Hoffmann, 1988, p. 374, and footnote 13).

Demographic Information.

The area destined to become Czechoslovakia after 1918 was a construct combining two regions with populations quite different from one another. According to the Census data for 1911 Czechs alone accounted for just 50 % of the population of Czechoslovakia overall.

The figures (1911) on the basis of ethnicity defined by the mother tongue *were* 30% Germans for the western part, now the Czech Republic. In the Czech and Slovak areas together there were 50% Czech, 22.3% German, 16% were Slovak, 4.78% Magyar (Hungarian), 3.79% Ukrainian, 1.29% Hebrew and Yiddish and 0.57% Polish (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum online).

The Germans, however, were mostly concentrated in what was the old Kingdom of Bohemia until 1918 (Map 7). Figure 2 shows that there the Germans accounted for almost a *third* of the population before 1945. Thereafter at the time of the German expulsions the region in question, now the Czech Republic, lost approximately a third of its total population.

The total population in the area of the Kingdom of Bohemia until 1918, now the Czech Republic		of which there were Czechs	and Germans
Census 1921	10,005,734	6,758,983	3,061,369
Census 1930	10,674,386	7,304,588	3,149,820
Census 1950	8,896,133	8,343,558	159,938

Figure 2 Census data for the Czech Republic (Bohemia, Moravia, Czech Silesia)
(Czech demographic handbook, 2009)

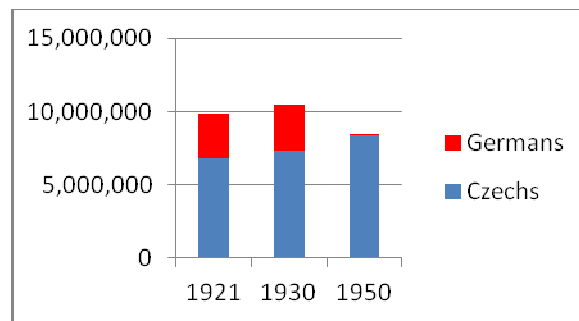


Figure 3 The proportion of Czechs and Germans-the area of the Czech Republic
(Census data: Czech demographic handbook, 2009)

This juxtaposition of a relatively small majority, the Czechs, governing a large minority, the Germans, was ultimately one of the major problems the first Czechoslovak Republic had to address in the interwar years before “Munich” (Zimmermann, 2002, concluding paras.)

3.7 The interwar years, a time of increasing tension

In 1919, a new era had started in Czech-German history. From being the “state-bearing” people (Agnew, 2004, p.199) up to 1918, the role of the German minority was now expected to be one of compliance under a Czech regime. Soon this would be interpreted as suppression by nationalistically inclined Germans.

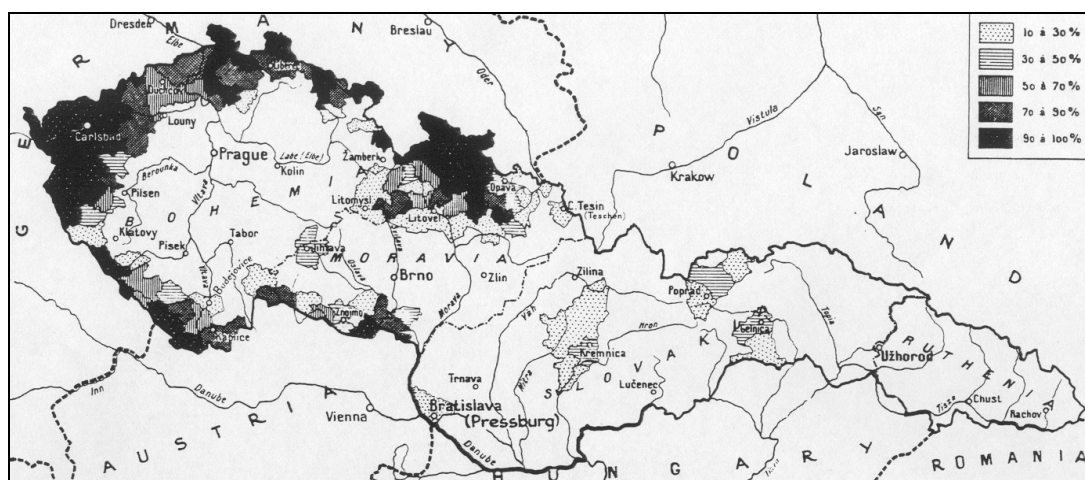
The 3.2 million Germans being the second largest population, ahead of the 2 million Slovaks, did not expect to be sidelined as an irrelevant ethnic nuisance getting in the way of a Slav-run Czechoslovakia. They were aware that much of the economic and industrial know-how, wealth, and power was concentrated in their regions. As the northern borderlands were one of the most densely industrialised regions in the world, the Germans were aware that the revenue generated there was considerable and frequently seemed to be used without reference to them.

The German population soon noted that their minority rights, guaranteed by the Czech delegation at Paris, seemed to be ignored, in spite of living in a state where the importance of democracy was constantly stressed, particularly abroad. Leading Czech politicians of the day, including President Masaryk and Foreign Minister, and later President, Beneš, gave the impression to foreign diplomats that the minorities would soon assimilate. In time problems would disappear as the Germans would have to learn to accept the situation.

Why would it often be argued by the Bohemian Germans/Sudeten Germans that political developments during the 20 years preceding 1938 were not a totally unexpected progression

after 1918? In their view what triggered the subsequent sequence of events leading to “Munich” were the boundary decisions after the end of the First World War with their inclusion into the new Slav Czechoslovakia, followed by Czech measures to benefit the new state which were perceived as anti-German.

The map below shows Czechoslovakia as a whole according to the Census of People in the Czechoslovak Republic of December, 1930 (Sčítání lidu v Republice Československé ze dne 1. prosince 1930). The cropped western section can be found at the beginning of this chapter.



8. Czechoslovakia: Location and Density - Germans pre-1945 (Census 1930)

(Source: a map of Czechoslovakia from a Czech source, Wiskemann, 1967, p. 119)

By 1930, many Czechs had been encouraged to take up residence in the border-areas. This was a constant thorn in the side of many Germans, some turning from patriotism to nationalism. In their opinion their regions had always been German Bohemian, and had never been destined to be part of a Czech country.

As a plebiscite had not been held, and the principle of self-determination not applied to the population in the German regions, these issues were to be used in the 1930s, a time of increasing nationalism, to justify anti-Czech attitudes. The battle for equal rights, as waged by German nationalist politicians and supported by growing numbers of Germans was perceived as “disloyalty” to the Czech state, *the* term of Czech rebuke of German demands and later a key slogan to justify the expulsions. The fateful year of 1938 approached without any political solutions in sight. The Germans became increasingly convinced that the Czech leaders were just procrastinating on the issue of equality and their interests and rights were going to be ignored forever. The Czech position on the other hand was/is that their attempts to find a way out of the problems were sabotaged by Nazi influence on the Sudeten population and their

leader Konrad Henlein. It is another example of the Czech-German split in the perception of their joint history during those troubled times.

Meanwhile the Czech population was now sharing an increasingly divided, relatively small homeland with German-speakers. There were German majority regions not only inside its borders, but in the language Islands of the central Czech areas and large German minorities in their main cities, with the country surrounded by Germany and Austria on three sides. Many of the Bohemian/Sudeten Germans were, however, rather stubbornly hanging on to their Germanness rather than wishing to become loyal Czechs, as expected. Czech politicians frequently referred to the existence of *their* country as being acutely endangered by German nationalism and wishing to neutralise what was perceived as German nationalist activities used rather undemocratic measures such as censorship and police surveillance of groups which were often just gathering for cultural activities (Wiskemann, 1967 p. 223). The Czechs' curtailing so-called disloyal attempts to undermine the sovereignty of Czechoslovakia, was much resented by the Germans in their majority regions as unacceptable interference with their democratic rights (Albrecht, 2007, pp. 93-94).

3.8 The “golden” Democracy of the first Republic of Czechoslovakia

The myth of the “golden” Democracy of Czechoslovakia was skilfully cultivated and spread worldwide by effective propaganda (Orzoff, 2009, pp. 3-19). Presenting Czechoslovakia to the world as being an “island of democracy” having to defend itself constantly against fascism helped to divert attention from some of its less positive aspects. American historian Professor Theodore Mills Kelly, speaking about the post-1918 Czech democracy at the Wilson Centre in Washington, commented as follows:

When we think of interwar Czechoslovakia, it is certainly true that it was much more democratic than its neighbours in East Central Europe and that the state managed to hang on to its original constitutional structure, more or less, until 1938. However, relative democracy - that is, being more democratic than, say Bulgaria or Hungary—is not the same thing as being the kind of democracy in which we would want to live today (or even then).

and continues with an outline of the Czech narrative:

for many centuries the lands of the Bohemian Crown were one of the great cultural, political and economic centres of Europe. But, after their defeat by the dastardly Habsburgs at White Mountain in 1620, the Czechs endured 300 years of Habsburg oppression in a sort of cultural darkness from which only a few glimmers of light emerged. In the last years of the Habsburg state, the oppressed Czech people waged a struggle first for autonomy and then for independence, culminating in 1918 when

Tomáš Masaryk and his loyal minions Edvard Beneš and Milan Štefánik founded Czechoslovakia, the shining star of democracy in an inter-war Europe riddled with dictatorships ... But, following the triple tragedy of Munich (in which Czechoslovak democracy was betrayed by Britain and France and by the Slovaks and Czechoslovak Germans), the war and the Communist coup d'état, the Czech and Slovak people descended again into darkness. During the next 40 years, the ultimately tragic Prague Spring of 1968 relieved this darkness only briefly. In 1989, the oppressed Czech people led by Václav Havel—a Masaryk for the 1990s—and his younger and more numerous loyal minions, conquered Communism through the purity of their moral purpose. Despite the best efforts of Havel and others loyal to the idea of Czechoslovak unity, the Republic foundered in 1992 on the rocks of resurgent and bull-headed Slovak nationalism. Through it all, the Czech love of democracy and freedom was like a shining beacon that even in the darkest years of the Communist era beckoned the nation to its ultimate destiny as a great, if small, member of the European family.

(Mills Kelly, 2003, Wilson Centre, Report, para. 2-4)

He concludes that this rather too perfect view of Czech history persists and continues to be replicated in whole or in part in books and articles, but that a new generation of scholars, has begun to question almost every aspect of this master narrative.

The origin of the reference to the “golden democracy” or “golden republic” of Czechoslovakia is fully explained in Orzoff’s book (2009, Introduction: “The golden Republic” pp. 3-19). Her account of inter-war propaganda offers further insights and helps to explain the goals and dreams of the founders of Czechoslovakia and all those who wished it to prosper in the face of considerable difficulties.

Orzoff (2009, p.11) writing about the myth of the golden republic and the downsides of democracy in the country states that “At the heart of Czechoslovakia’s propaganda effort lay the Czechoslovak modern national myth, crafted by many, but above all by Masaryk, Beneš and the Castle.” These myths had become the national narrative and she identifies them thus:

The story goes like this: under Habsburg rule, the innately democratic, peace-loving, tolerant Czechs were viciously repressed by bellicose, authoritarian reactionary Austrians, ... a devoted group of [Czech] intellectuals ... brought the dormant nation back to life by re-crafting literary Czech, re-telling Czech history, and making claims on behalf of a “Czech” nation ...

Not surprisingly the Austrians and German Bohemians saw it quite differently and would have concurred with every word of the following quotation by Orzoff (2009, p. 36).

All in all, the nineteenth century under Austria left the Czechs a valuable political legacy. Czech educational and cultural development exploded under Habsburg rule, as did Czech political sophistication and participation. Masaryk and Beneš were products of this rich heritage, and drew on it in wartime to create a new amalgam of morality, myth, and history for the interwar era.

After World War 1 the Czechs felt justified in running the new state as they saw fit taking measures appropriate to their needs resulting in immediate ethnic frictions. With pragmatism unfortunately lacking on both sides these were to become a constant feature of inter-war political life in Czechoslovakia. The German speaking population were portrayed as belligerent trouble-makers to the world unlike their Slavic co-citizens who, through continuous, assiduously reinforced propaganda, managed to uphold a positive image of what they wanted to achieve, characterised here by Orzoff

After 1918 the myths continued, Czechoslovakia made itself an island of democratic values, rationalism and fair-mindedness amid Europe falling quickly into the thrall of authoritarianism and fascism. The Czechs ... continued to be depicted as a tolerant, prosperous, cosmopolitan people ... embodying Europe's proudest ideals, the quintessential liberal inhabitants of an ideal civic sphere. The mystic Czechoslovakia extended effortless tolerance to its many nationalities and religions ...

(Orzoff, 2009, p. 11)

The purpose behind all the propaganda was to help unify a struggling state in order to allow it to function as a sovereign nation. The myth, derived from the evocative image of "zlata Praha", golden Prague, was used to strengthen the new country. It was presented as a place open to all ethnic groups and intent on upholding the values of pacifism, liberalism and democracy. Inter-war propaganda in all its manifestations such as doctored photos, and bending the ears of foreign politicians and diplomats helped the new state to function as a sovereign nation, separate from Austrian and German dominance, but with modern Czech nationalism in its place.

Propaganda had indeed helped to sever the country's previous ties to the Habsburg Monarchy, not only physically as had happened, but also psychologically in the minds of Czech people at home and abroad. To this end the image and qualities of the new country and its democratic system were artificially enhanced to detract from problems and help to establish its legitimate existence in the eyes of the world.

All along the towering intellectualism of Masaryk guided Czech and Slovak nationalists. His reconstruction of nationalism was based on modern socio-economic ideas and realism rather than romantic historicism (Sayer, 1998, p. 155, 378). He was ably and loyally supported by the

unwavering devotion and persistence of fellow nationalist Edvard Beneš (1884-1948), foreign minister in 1918, who succeeded Masaryk in 1935 as president.

The successful pre- and post- First World War projection of a positive picture of the high ideals of the founders of Czechoslovakia vis-à-vis its own people and the world was one of the most important strategies which helped to secure support from many quarters. The idea that this nation state was essential for its people and within the context of European and world politics was spread by the tireless efforts of Masaryk, Beneš and Štefánik, as well as Václav Klobáček, co-founder of the Czech National Socialist party and founding editor of *České slovo* (The Czech Word) and Jan Herben, Masaryk's biographer. Among non-Czechs, S. Harrison Thomson and R.W. Seton-Watson were the most prominent proponents of the idea before the Second World War. The concept of the golden Republic of Czechoslovakia and its system of government, the golden democracy, soon successfully penetrated the consciousness of British and American Czechophiles.

The other side of the coin was the perceived threat to everything the Germans valued. After 1918 many Sudeten Germans, particularly in the mixed language areas felt their culture and identity under threat by the "czechification" activities of the Czechs' voluntary national defence associations, the Legionnaires [troops which turned against the Axis powers to fight with the Allies during the First World War], and Sokol. The term "Sudeten German" soon took on a controversial political meaning, especially in the 1930s as an increasing number of Germans rejected the exclusive identity of the Czechoslovak First Republic. The Germans were uneasy because they had no territorial identity, no provincial autonomy and no satisfactory outlet for political dissent. They believed the state had failed to grant them equality, in spite of its democratic rhetoric and the willingness of German political parties since 1926 to participate actively in government coalitions. However, this new Sudeten German collective which had emerged from very disparate group of identities was now fused within an overarching Sudeten "Germandom" which was as artificial a construct as that of the identity of the new Czechoslovak state (Wingfield, 2007, pp. 231-235).

The year 1918 marked the point when the split between Czech and German public perceptions of one another was beginning to widen alarmingly. Subsequently the years 1938 and 1945-48 became turning points in that history, to be explained more fully in subsequent chapters.

3.9 Contentious Issues between Czechs and Germans

It was inevitable that Czech euphoria about their very own new state was seen as triumphalism of the new masters by many of those sharing their lands. As soon as the new state began to exercise its powers, a Pandora's box of contentious issues burst open. Measures perceived as

provocative by the Germans led to mounting grievances leading to immediate and continuing political struggle between Czech and German nationalists.

The drafting of the constitution and new laws became an early symbol of rebuke to the Germans as not one representative of the German population was invited to take part in any sort of consultation process, in flagrant disregard about the much lauded democratic principles of the new state.

The Minorities' Issue. The Czech delegation in Paris had obtained approval for their national frontiers to include more than 3 million Germans in return for the promise that Czechoslovakia would be "a second Switzerland"- a promise which was not kept (Bruegel, 1973, p. 47).

Political Life. The Germans at first refused to participate in political life, known as *political negativism* but soon realised that to gain influence, fight discrimination, and pursue vital economic interests, representation in Parliament was necessary. Therefore, they cooperated with the Czechoslovak regime from the mid-twenties, a time referred to as "*activism*". However, what led to the complete and catastrophic political breakdown of the late 1930s was the impression that their cooperation was not translating into tangible concessions for their people.

As new citizens of Czechoslovakia, they, along with all the other ethnic minorities, expected to be loyal to the new state, were frequently made to feel distinctly unwanted; Czech triumphalism and humiliations had become part of daily life for the Germans, their reactions also being referred to by E. Wiskemann despite her sympathy to the Czech cause. "In a thousand ways, the Czechs in the early days of their Republic set out to humiliate the Germans" (Wiskemann, 1967, p.118). The developing czechocentric political scenario created despair and anger, followed over the years by a conviction in many German quarters that whatever their efforts, nothing would improve their situation of not being on an equal footing with their Czech co-citizens

The currency reform and other fiscal measures delivered a blow to the German population's financial security. The laws sanctioning it were passed between 25 February, and 7 June 1919 to separate Czechoslovak finances from the Austro-Hungarian Central Bank and stabilise the economy. It made the new Czech currency worth more than the post-war German or Austro-Hungarian currency. This did initially forestall inflation but it also made industrial products more expensive. Moreover all holdings in bank accounts and savings accounts were frozen apart from wages. Many people, mostly German speakers, lost a lot of money held in war loans as Austrian war bonds were converted into a loan to the new Czechoslovak state at 1% interest. Overall, 50 percent of all cash holdings and savings were retained as a forced loan to the state.

Czechoslovak banknotes were overprinted to distinguish them from the currencies of other successor states (Agnew, 2004, p.183).

Financial measures to benefit the Czech economy also proved contentious because levies were to be introduced indirectly targeting the Germans who were deemed to be better off than the Czechs. Plans were drawn up for a property and capital gains tax to deal with war debts. The Germans of Bohemia complained that they would be hit harder than the Czechs, as they would be subject to the steepest rate of the capital levy and the tax on the increase of wealth from 1913 to 1918. They predicted utterly negative consequences for a population already impoverished by the consequences of war. These sentiments are reflected in an impassioned speech to the Senate by a certain Dr. Schmidt (Dr. Schmidt, Senate protocols, Prague, 1920-1925, para. 4-8 [no exact date provided]).

The Economy The Czech economy suffered after 1918 because the Austro-Hungarian internal market of 54 million people had disappeared, and the world of economics and global markets had changed. The Depression, which was beyond the control of the Czech Government, resulted in negative consequences for the export-dependent Sudeten economy. Industrial competitiveness was also compromised in spite of efforts to deflate the value of the Czech Krona. By 1924 capital investments by German nationals in heavy industries, mining, the railways and spa towns had collectively been taken over, a result of the Maximal Liquidation Programme. (Muth, 1996, pp. 140-142; Teichova, 1988, pp. 59-62; Wiskemann, 1967, p.162).

Matters deteriorated from the late twenties into the thirties when the Germans in industrial Northern Bohemia suffered proportionally more than the Czechs, as their consumer industries were badly hit by the economic downturn. Long-term unemployment in the 1930s rose to catastrophic levels in the German regions affecting many more German workers (approximately 500,000) than Czechs. There followed severe hardship for a considerable length of time resulting in near starvation in many households. German industrialists tendering for big State contracts complained that they were more likely to be awarded to Czech firms while those in German areas were struggling financially (Runciman Report, 1938). When Czechs were brought in to do work in German areas it seemed like a deliberate affront to the unemployed locals (Wiskemann 1967, p.193).

All of this led to frustrations on many fronts and dissatisfaction spread. The German-speakers kept comparing their situation to the prosperous times under the Habsburgs, concluding their needs were not adequately addressed, and interpreting it as yet another sign of the Czech Government's ineptitude, indifference and discriminatory attitudes. After Hitler had come to power in Germany (1933) the employment situation there was quite quickly transformed for the

better. Sudeten Germans, having followed events just across the border, were impressed and many left to take up employment there.

The Law of Nostrification, passed on 11 December 1919 was just one example of social and economic engineering being undertaken and adversely affecting the minorities. There was now a stipulation that "... at least half the ownership and management of all firms operating on the territory of Czechoslovakia to be in the hands of citizens of the country" (Albrecht, 2007, p.100). It required Czechs to be part of German firms whether or not they were needed or had the necessary qualifications.

There was pressure in all employment sectors to give preference to Czechs, also in managerial positions, which was seen as discrimination by the minorities (Albrecht, 2007, p.105). It is therefore understandable that, "Nostrification provided grist to the Sudeten German nationalists' mill ..." (Albrecht, 2007, p.102). All this did not encourage German industrialists' approval for the Czech government. Instead people's interest in the vigorous new government of Chancellor Hitler just across the border grew into open admiration, not for Pan-German reasons, but on account of the economic achievements there.

The Land Reform was another issue which hit the Germans hard. In pre-1918 Austria most land in Czechoslovakia was held by a small percentage of large landowners employing tens of thousands of people in forestry, agriculture, breweries, sugar refineries etc. The new Government decreed the land had to be redistributed for social reasons, which would have been acceptable had poor Germans also benefited. But the minorities were mostly excluded from acquiring land. Cornwall (1997, p. 261) speaks of the "... Sudeten German perception ... that their national assets were steadily diminishing to the benefit of their new Czech masters." Subsequent expropriation affected about 30% of land under German ownership of which only approximately 5% was awarded to Germans. The rest ended up in the hands of Czechs, who were encouraged by their government to settle in the German areas. The main beneficiaries were Czech landless peasants, soldiers and legionnaires, who quickly sold the land on for profit, in many cases back to the original owners or previous tenants. Of the approximately 65,000 employees originally working for the original landowners only about 12,000 still had jobs after the land was expropriated. All this created further resentment within the German population, whose centuries-old connection with, and care of their land had always been very important to them (Habel, 2005, pp. 269-272; Suppan, 2006, p. 10).

After *the Minority Schools Law* was passed on 3 April 1919, the provision of schools proved to be yet another bone of contention. A noticeable shrinkage in the number of German schools occurred in the mainly German-speaking areas, with the balance shifting in favour of Czech schools. The process of the dissolution of German schools was largely finished by the mid-

twenties. Policies aimed at bolstering Czech numbers in the German districts had the effect of further increasing radicalisation and polarisation of attitudes on both sides. German schools became subject to interference by the Czech authorities looking for Czech children “who required rescuing from already half-emptied classrooms“ (King, 202, p.161).

Among the closures Schultze-Rhonhof (2007, p. 157) lists 345 former Bohemian German primary schools and 47 High Schools (Gymnasien).

Below are the figures for the Higher Education Sector for Bohemia, excluding university education, but including teacher training (Prinz, 1969, pp. 56-57); they show a steady increase of Czech schools matched by a decrease in German ones compared to the situation before 1920.

Bohemia	1913/14	125 German Schools – 157 Czech schools	
Czechoslovakia	1920/21	113	190
Czechoslovakia	1925/26	90	193
Czechoslovakia	1935/36	81	203

Post-1918 the district of Gablonz was also affected by a reduction of state finances for German schools (Stuetz & Zenkner, 1992, p. 171). In nearby Reichenberg resentment was created because the Gymnasium (high school) there was taken over for Czech pupils, while the German-speakers had to make do with the Realschule (intermediate grade school) (Wiskemann, 1938, p. 212).

This development was seen as a deliberate effort by the Czech Government to reduce state financial support to the German education sector and undermine its efficiency. For the German population, particularly in the majority districts, this was perceived as further proof that their culture and “Volkstum”, their Germanness, and everything German Bohemian culture represented was now in danger of being swamped by creeping “czechfication”.

In 1930 Wenzel Jaksch, not a German nationalist, but the well known activist representative of the German Social Democratic Workers Party, criticised Czech School politics vis-a-vis the minorities in the Czech Parliament. He pointed to the problems of local district administrations having to suffer the interference of bureaucracy and the exaggerated emphasis on language issues. He found it intolerable that the Czech and Slovak “Staatsvolk” persisted in using minority schools as a way to further their national aspirations. After four months of parliamentary experience in democracy he had seen enough of Czechoslovak school politics and the driving forces behind them in what he called ‘ “Absolutism reinforced by Bureaucracy” ’ , quoting Victor Adler, the founder of the Austrian Social Democratic Workers' Party (Bachstein, 1974, pp. 44-45).

The reason for the Czech government to justify their actions was the desire to speed up the assimilation of non-Czechs which was much resented by the Germans. Educational provision was, however, needed for the children of new Czech settlers in the German areas.

The Language Law of 1925-26 was another cause for dissatisfaction in the German majority regions. According to Wiskemann, (1967, p.126) I, a drastic law was passed in December 1924, which led to a great many dismissals of German-speaking officials in the state sector. An exam to prove fluency in spoken and written Czech was now required for all state employees, even in the purely German areas. Between 1921 and 1930 33 000 German-speaking civil servants (Staatsbeamte) were removed and replaced with 41 000 Czechs (Prinz, 2002, p. 393), many also lost their pension rights. Innumerable German employees in other sectors suffered the same fate. Wiskemann, who spent many months speaking to both sides in 1937, wrote "... that the Czechs had always been bitterly opposed to a State language in pre-war Austria but immediately discovered the need for one in their own state." (Wiskemann, 1967, p. 120).

For dealings with the authorities and legal processes in courts Bruegel (1973, p. 60) comments that in areas where there was a 2/3 German majority, matters could be dealt with entirely in German. However, below that level were 299,728 German speakers, Germans living in predominantly Czech areas, which meant they had no language rights and had to use Czech or Slovak for official business.

The Law for the Defence of the Republic was passed in the spring of 1923. This was a very controversial step as it provided for severe punishment for what was judged as treason or conspiracy against the Czechoslovak Republic. The Germans felt their rights were being menaced, a perception later reinforced by the involvement of police, detectives and the courts against German individuals. Censorship was used to control the contents of published material in German, such as schoolbooks, encyclopedias and the press in an effort to protect the official Czech version (Wiskemann, 1967, p. 121-123, p. 223).

The Minorities Commission became another cause for German grievances as it was soon noticed that the government in Prague seemed to be ignoring the minority rights guaranteed by the Czech delegation at Paris. To this effect a declaration had been signed by Czechoslovakia as part of the Treaty of St. Germain (10 September 1919) that in cases of dispute, members of the minorities would have the right to petition the Minorities Commission in the newly formed League of Nations. Cases which were supposed to be dealt with concerned employment discrimination issues, dissatisfaction with the schools sector and expropriations as a result of the land reform. Though complaints were dealt with by the Minorities Section of the League of Nations whenever petitions were submitted (Cornwall, 1997, pp. 16-20), this would prove futile

in all German cases between 1920-1931, irrespective of merit (Habel, 2005, pp. 303-305), as decisions were left to individual governments, in this case Czechoslovakia.

3.10 Czech- German relations preceding the Sudeten Crisis

The Germans had been hit hard by their minority status within the new Czechoslovakia as well as having been officially labelled as colonists and intruders, and not consulted on constitutional issues. Lack of pragmatism on both sides could be blamed for the situation which had arisen from a confused political scenario. "Negativism", a lack of willingness to cooperate within the Czechoslovak political system, continued with the nationalist parties, but not all German parties after 1918 were disinclined to cooperate with the Czechoslovak Government. The German Social Democrats, representing the industrial working class, as well as Christian parties and anti-fascist movements soon joined them, willing to work within the parliamentary system. This willingness to cooperate was called "Activism", which might have lasted had the economy not started to face increasing difficulties towards the end of the 20s. By that time the workforce in the Sudeten industries was much more affected than workers in the heavy engineering industries in Czech areas.

Meanwhile traditional German Bohemian patriotism, post-war referred to as Sudeten nationalism, became infiltrated by Pan-German ideas, which had originally developed during the Romantic era. Fears of "Germandom" being under threat, outnumbered in a sea of Slavs, were the reason why German and Sudeten patriotism became a fluid mix of ideas and objectives, some being centred on local patriotism others looking beyond the borders to Germany. Once the originally negativist nationalist parties had started to participate in Czechoslovak politics, they would be opting in and out of cooperation with one another, while some would later cease to exist altogether, but the equal rights issue and territorial autonomy remained the key objectives for their leaders.

Towards the end of the 1920s increasing disappointment with the government in Prague, and the general lack of success in the nationality question led to disillusionment among the Sudeten electorate and their political representatives. This was added to by frustration over the catastrophic unemployment situation in their areas which had resulted in abject poverty and starvation in several regions. Constant complaints about the chauvinistic approach with which the Czech administration used their powers vis-a-vis the Germans and their negative experience of the "golden democracy" caused more contention. The Prague government had increasingly adopted an unwelcome authoritarian approach in defence of a perceived "fascist" threat long before it manifested itself as a danger to the country. Various Czech measures, such as surveillance, and problematic cases of imprisonment of Sudeten patriots and/or nationalists for anti-Czech activities were seen as bullying tactics. Meanwhile in the words of

Antonín Švela Czechoslovakia was presented to the world as a “bastion of western democracy” (Andrea Orzoff, 2009, p. 185), which helped to divert attention from justified complaints against some of its practices.

Two nationalist parties, the Deutsche Nationalistische Partei (DNP) and the Deutsche Nationalsozialistische Arbeiter Partei (DNSAP) had initially cooperated in 1922 in a negative stance towards the legitimacy of Czechoslovakia. They considered merging into a mass-party in answer to the Sudeten unemployment problem. This, however, did not happen. The DNSAP, having imported certain characteristics of Hitler’s National Socialist Party (NSDAP), registered impressive results during the Czechoslovak municipal elections of 1933. About a month after Hitler’s success in Germany the parliamentary immunity of the DNSAP representatives was lifted by Prague as its goals were considered to be hostile to the state. To forestall party finances being confiscated the DNSAP dissolved itself. After the parties were outlawed on 11 November 1933, with some of their leading members arrested, all DNSAP property was confiscated.

Their followers, however, did not melt away, as the Czech government might have hoped; instead they found a home in Konrad Henlein’s new *Sudetendeutsche Heimatfront* (SHF) created in 1933, followed in 1935 by the *Sudetendeutsche Partei* (SdP) (Gebel 2000, p.14). Henlein’s new party won a resounding victory in the parliamentary elections of 1935 gaining two thirds of the German vote (Agnew 2004, p.194). This gave them almost the highest number of parliamentary deputies, 44, only one less than for the Czech Agrarian Party. That success was largely due to the dissatisfaction of Sudeten voters with the lack of success of the activist parties in getting actual concessions from the Czech government in respect of equality and autonomy for their regions in Northern Bohemia (Brandes, 2009, p. 311). Henlein’s demands had initially started in a fairly moderate tone, when, as a member of the provisional executive committee of the *Sudetendeutsche Heimatfront*, he had stated his wish for a solution within the existing Czech borders at the party rally in Aussig an der Elbe (Ústí nad Labem) on 28 January 1934. He had indicated on that occasion that their movement was not a Fascist movement and affirmed his support for the idea of Sudeten Germans being active within the Czechoslovak state on the basis of regional autonomy and being “equal among equals” (Kuepper, 2010, p. 59).

After it had become obvious that even the 1935 landslide victory of Henlein’s party would not translate into more political rights and a meaningful role in the Prague Government, the radical right wing of the SdP became ever more vociferously assertive in their demand for incorporation into the Reich. According to Cornwall (2007, pp.134-136), Czech tactics from 1935 onwards were partly responsible for pushing the SdP in a fully Pan-German and Nazi direction. It took over two years after the 1935 election’s warning for the government to promise action on

German grievances, and proportional representation in the civil service as a commitment. It came too late in 1938, just before Munich (Agnew 2004, p. 199).

Austria's annexation by Germany on 17 March 1938 was enthusiastically welcomed by the majority of the Sudeten population and seemingly increased their political confidence and the hope of many for the Annexation of Sudetenland to the Reich (Brandes 2009, pp. 70 -73, 314). Henlein commented that those who have right on their side will succeed in the end and appealed to all Sudeten Germans to join a united front by registering for membership of the SdP. Subsequent propaganda encouraged the German population to vote in favour of just one party to effectively represent German interests in the municipal elections of 1938. The idea of dropping all the old party differences was attractive to many people, pleased with a movement which seemed to have adopted the best aspects of Hitlerism, without the brutal methods used in the Reich (Wiskemann 1967, p. 206).

Brandes presents a vivid picture of how a well organised recruitment campaign for the SdP went into over-drive. However, in some areas zealots did not just encourage people to join the party but developed questionable methods to put pressure on opponents. Bullying tactics were employed and intensified before the May elections, peaking in the September crisis just before Munich. Some SdP party workers, trying to win maximum support, went from door to door listing people who were either politically indifferent or members of other parties. Czechs, Social Democrats, Communists and Jews were frequently harassed, mainly by young over-enthusiastic male Henlein supporters (Griffin, 1939).

By then psychological pressure made membership of the SdP a pre-requisite in most private employment scenarios while Czechs had dominated in the state sector since 1918. In some areas Czech and Jewish businesses were boycotted, attacked or vandalised and their owners subjected to threats (Brandes, 2009, pp. 313- 314). There were occasions where people observed to do business or to be shopping there were noted down by party workers and often also had their photos taken. Roving groups of young men were trying to prove their usefulness to the cause which initially was supposed to be Sudeten autonomy within Czechoslovakia. Children whose parents were Social Democrats, Communists or Jews could also become the target of bullies. However, these scenarios varied from place to place, some were badly hit others escaped with minor disturbances. An unidentifiable number of locations remained calm as was the case in Gablonz, which transpired from some testimonies.

Before the May 1938 elections the confidence of the activist parties had been shaken and their membership collapsed when rumours started to circulate that Germany was about to act in support of Sudetenland. These spread like shock-waves among the population and resulted in many people striving to be on the right side, should the rumours come true. Therefore many people who had previously been nationally indifferent or belonged to other parties, buckled

under the psychological strain, and joined the SdP. Even Social Democrats of long standing and many others broke with old-established party loyalties after having suffered from difficult economic circumstances. Should annexation become reality, they hoped for secure employment, better wages and higher unemployment payments, as was the case in Germany.

3.11 Henlein's "Karlsbad" demands

During a Sudeten German Party [SdP] rally preceding the May 1938 elections, held in Karlsbad (Karlovy Vary) on 23 and 24 April 1938, Konrad Henlein outlined his party's key demands in an eight-point programme. One of those, *the wrong done to the Sudeten Germans in 1918 to be removed* would have been central to what most Sudeten Germans had wanted at the time. The eight points were summarised in the following memorandum for the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Eight Demands of Konrad Henlein

Announced at Karlsbad, 24 April 1938, and summarised in the following memorandum for the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs

1. *Restoration of complete equality of the German national group with the Czech people; "Alles was den Tschechen erlaubt ist, muss auch uns erlaubt sein, mit einem Wort: Wir wollen nur als Freie unter Freien leben" (Henlein, 1938, p.48).*
2. *Recognition of the Sudeten German national group as a legal entity for the safeguarding of this position of equality within the State;*
3. *Confirmation and recognition of the Sudeten German settlement area;*
4. *Building up of Sudeten German self-government in the Sudeten German settlement area in all branches of public life insofar as questions affecting the interests and the affairs of the German national group are involved;*
5. *Introduction of legal provisions for the protection of those Sudeten German citizens living outside the defined settlement area of their national group;*
6. *Removal of wrong done to Sudeten German element since the year 1918, and compensation for damage suffered through this wrong;*
7. *Recognition and enforcement of the principle: German public servants in the German area;*
8. *Complete freedom to profess adherence to the German element and German ideology ["Weltanschauung" in the German text is not quite as specific as "ideology"].*

Henlein, K. (1938, 24 April). Karlsbad Demands. *Documents on German Foreign Policy*. London, 1950, Series D, II, 135, p. 242).

The demands were designed to appear innocuous to outside observers but the Czechoslovak authorities found the final point about the commitment to keeping to a "Deutsche Weltanschauung" (German view of the world) particularly unacceptable, arguing that it was not possible to allow the establishment of what they saw as a Nazi system within the territory of a democratic state.

After Henlein had declared his commitment to keep to a “Deutsche Weltanschauung”, this was interpreted by many as synonymous with a declaration for National Socialism (Brandes 2009, p. 314). However, whichever way one looks at the term, it just denotes a general unspecified concept which within the political context of the time could have been taken for a commitment to Nazi ideology. However, as he addressed Bohemian/Sudeten issues at the time “a German attitude” could just as much have been interpreted as the German vision for their homelands rather than a Czech one. Also, as von Arburg (1999, pp. 19-20) points out, nowhere in the programme was there any mention of Anschluss (annexation). Therefore an important question remains, what actually motivated Sudeten voters to support the SdP under Henlein in the May-June elections of 1938 in the large numbers shown in the table below. Was their motivation to finally get a patriotic solution for a purely local territorial and national problem relevant only to Sudetenland or a coded message by Henlein to support Nazism and the “Anschluss”?

The results of the elections held in May-June 1938 delivered a land-slide victory for the SdP. According to figures produced by the SdP, 1,279,045 voters (91.4%) of those eligible to vote had supported the SdP (Luža, 1964, p.130; Zimmermann, 1999, p. 60). Recent calculations by Brandes (2009, p.182) put the percentage of votes at about 88%, rather than a percentage in excess of 90%, usually quoted, as he allows for voters in favour of the Communist party. Exact election statistics are not available as they were never published by the Czech authorities. Therefore neither the ethnicity of the voters, nor the number of votes or the percentage of votes for the SdP, can be accurately verified (Gebel, 2000, p. 58). Henlein supporters would have been voting for the demands in his Karlsbad speech, but as mentioned, these were couched in an opaque language, inscrutable as to his intentions. Were all voters aware how their votes could or would be used?

Election Results for Gablonz (Brandes, 2009, p. 324)

	SdP	KPTsch	DSAP	Czech parties
	Sudeten German Party	Communist Party of Czechoslovakia	German Socialist Workers Party	
1935	16789	1146	676	3196
1938	18377	805	566	

Total population figures for Gablonz for 1938 are not available. According to Rademacher (2000) the figure for 1939 was 28,771, some 4000 less than the figure in the Czechoslovak Census of 1930. New Czech settlers, anti-Fascists and Jews were no longer part of the local population.

Under pressure after the resounding victory for Henlein's SdP and international pressure, President Beneš finally started to offer concessions in respect of the language law, the administration of schools, proportional employment of German state employees and a higher proportion of state contracts to be awarded to German firms. The offer, however, came much too late and had been overtaken by earlier decisions taken in a meeting with Hitler on 28 March 1938. Henlein and his associate Karl Hermann Frank had spent three hours with Hitler, Ribbentrop and Hess after which Henlein summarised the Fuehrer's views, "We must always demand so much that we can never be satisfied." In spite of the fact that Henlein had indicated a desire to keep Sudetenland within Czechoslovakia in 1934 and negotiated in 1937 and even 1938 about the possibility of autonomy within the state, he had finally become a tool in Hitler's power game (Gebel, 2000, p.361).

In the Carlsbad programme of 24 April 1938, Henlein had demanded autonomy for the German majority within Czechoslovak borders, but with recognition of their ethnicity, "Germanness", and the right of adherence to their German culture. Although Henlein's Carlsbad demands (The Times, 1938, 8 June, *Carlsbad demand restated*) had apparently been accepted by the Czechs in June 1938 (British Government Cabinet Papers, 15 June 1938), the German side could not detect any real commitment on the part of the Beneš Government to legally implement the changes and accused it of playing for time, "... behind a façade of working on a new legal instrument for administration for the Sudetenland ... to gain time so that the Czechoslovak army could increase its combat readiness" (Lukes 1999, p. 174). By then, Hitler had indicated he would come to the rescue of the Sudeten Germans if their oppressed status persisted.

Henlein's party now contained a truly disparate group of people with different ideas about what would bring salvation to Sudetenland. They included radical Nazi supporters, moderate sympathisers, renegade Social Democrats and previous members of the Christian parties (both groups had previously been willing to cooperate with the Czech State). The extreme radical nationalists and committed Nazis like Karl Hermann Frank were desperate for incorporation into the Reich. By summer of 1937 Frank had already been convinced, that the annexation of the Sudetenland was a foregone conclusion (Kuepper, p. 93, Fn 217). Many though would have been ambivalent about becoming "Reichsdeutsch". Their original Austrian Bohemian/Sudeten identity and cultural background was, after all, different from a German one, something which can still be observed in respondents' language and mannerisms.

For the SdP leadership the time for compromise had in any case passed. They were encouraged and empowered by the knowledge of Hitler's previous assurances and by now very public support. On 12 September 1938, at the Nuremberg Party Rally, Hitler threatened, that he would no longer tolerate "...the further oppression and persecution of those 3.5 million Germans' " (Suppan, 2008, p. 6). Konrad Henlein subsequently refused the Prague government's and their President Beneš's proposals for autonomy within Czechoslovakia, procrastinating, as directed by Hitler in March 1938, with further demands which he knew could not be fulfilled by the Czechs (Suppan, 2006, p. 23). After Hitler's Nuremberg speech the situation in the Sudetenland began to deteriorate rapidly. Fights between radical members of the SdP, the "Freiwilliger Schutzdienst" (Voluntary protection association) and anti-Fascists caused unrest and fatalities among Czechoslovaks and Sudeten Germans (Zimmermann 1999, p. 62).

The Czech government's immediate reaction to the fighting mentioned was to outlaw the SdP the next day, 16 September 1938. This resulted from 18 September onwards in yet more provocative acts by the members of the SFK militia (Sudeten Freikorps), opposed by formations of Czech followers of the Communist party, using similar tactics. With 52 Germans and 119 Communists dead (Zimmermann, 1999, p. 64) these skirmishes between political opponents had brought the region perilously close to civil war. After the mobilisation of the Czech Army on 23 September 1938, which meant the majority of Sudeten German men were eligible for Czech military service (Suppan, 2008, p. 7), many members of the SdP were arrested by the Czech military and more unrest followed. After another inflammatory speech by Hitler at the Sportpalast in Berlin (26 September 1938), the Sudeten population feared war, and thought it prudent to move to their basements (Zimmermann, 1999, p. 65).

An additional interesting source relevant to the events of those days should be mentioned here; they are the notes contained in a little known book by Jonathan Griffin, *Lost Liberty?*, published in 1939. He was a British journalist and broadcaster for the Czech English short-wave service, later to become the wartime head of European intelligence at the BBC. He recorded his experiences as an eye-witness to many skirmishes peaking in September of 1938. These occurred in the towns of Eger/Cheb, Franzensbad/Františkovy Lázně, Karlsbad/Karlovy Vary. Marienbad/Mariánské Lázně, Komotau/Chomutov and Warnsdorf/Varnsdorf in the Bohemian North West. He describes acts of vandalism, mainly by aggressive German youths against Czech and Jewish shops and fights between Henleinists, Communists and Socialists with fatalities on all sides including members of the Czech police (Griffin, 1939, pp. 26-35). Gablonz in the North East did not suffer unrest and when the Czech government declared a state of emergency, Gablonz was not included.

Henlein, fearing arrest, fled to the security of the Reich on 14 September 1938, and proclaimed his "Heim ins Reich" message the next day. The reaction in Sudetenland was recorded by

Griffin which confirmed what had been mentioned earlier, that this now obvious link between Henlein and Hitler was by no means welcomed by every Sudeten German who had voted for the SdP in May 1938. This turn of events "... disgusted and dismayed many moderates among SdP supporters, as they had never wanted or expected a separation from Bohemia ..., he had not told them so openly" (Griffin, 1939, pp. 36-37) Griffin was certain that many had not given Henlein their mandate for separation from Bohemia and also tells us about the many hundreds of letters received by the influential Conservative Sudeten German newspaper *Bohemia* expressing voters' views that their support was obtained on the basis of Henlein's Karlsbad programme. There he had pointed out that Sudeten Germans' were loyal and law abiding people, now his call to irredentism would saddle them with all the consequences of treason to the State. According to that German-language paper it was mostly young men who created trouble (Griffin, 1939, pp. 38-39).

After the annexation there was further proof that National Socialism was not everybody's choice who had been a member of the SdP. In Sudetengau, all those registered as members of the SdP by 10 April 1938, 1,057,968 persons, had to apply separately if they wished to become members of the NSDAP, the Nazi Party. Just below half of the SdP membership did (Zimmermann, 1999, pp. 134-135). The other half did not join, perhaps because their traditional Sudeten patriotism mattered more to them than being Reichsdeutsch.

After March 1938 Henlein had had to act according to Hitler's directives but managed to maintain an image of reason and righteousness which fooled many. He had previously visited Britain and left a good impression on a number of officials and politicians. Gebel tells us how even the British journalist George Eric Rowe Gedye, who viewed Henlein in very critical terms as he saw in him as a stand-in to Hitler, was not quite immune to his charm. He described him in 1936 as " mild-mannered, quiet, serious and gifted with a curious persuasiveness which, while one talks with him makes one feel that it would be an undeserved personal insult to cast doubt on his statements which ordinary horse-sense tells one to be untrue" (Gedye, 1939, p.393 cited by Gebel 2000, p. 44, fn 93).

As is shown in Part 2, the times of Henlein are remembered differently by German and Czech respondents. The significance of the aggressive actions of Henlein supporters in the weeks and months before "Munich" seems to be largely absent from German collective memory. Specifically targeted during research no examples of trans-generational memories on this issue were produced by the German respondents, whereas the Czech testimonies contained some information in this respect.

3.12 Neville Chamberlain and The Runciman Mission

After the political tensions in Sudetenland threatened to escalate into civil war, Lord Walter Runciman of Doxford, Liberal politician and President of the Board of Trade, was sent on a fact-finding mission to Czechoslovakia by the British Government. He spent several weeks in Czechoslovakia during the summer months of 1938 in an effort to gain insight into the political situation there.

After Hitler had indicated he would come to the rescue of the Sudeten Germans if their oppressed status persisted, tensions continued to rise and the world feared war. A leading article in *The Times* of 7 September 1938, entitled *Czechs and Sudetens*, seemed to advocate the transfer of the Sudetenland to Germany, which was seen abroad as representing the attitude of the British Government. According to Vyšný (2003, p.?) a communiqué issued after negotiations between the Sudeten representatives and the Czech government in the presence of Lord Runciman points to the by now impossible situation for the Czechoslovak Government. In it the Czech government is reprimanded for not having been more cooperative with Henlein before he formulated his Carlsbad demands, but acknowledges that the Prague Government could clearly not accept a heterodox state within its borders with Sudeten allegiances transferred to the head of a neighbouring state.

As stated earlier, by no means all the members of the SdP supported its radical national-socialist wing, as Czech historiography tends to assert, as well as the public discourse on the issue. Hard-up working folk, many suffering extreme poverty (Bruegel, 1973, X), also previously committed Socialists, had chosen to defect from the Social Democrats to support the pro-Reich German SdP out of frustration about their ongoing economic difficulties, which appeared to have been solved in Germany.

According to Runciman "...there was a considerable percentage of people in the German areas, who did not wish to be incorporated in the Reich, '...". He also described Henlein, the SdP leader, as a " 'genial, good-tempered person, ...' " (Vyšný, 2003, p. 321).

The British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, fearing war and intent on preserving peace, was regularly informed by Lord Runciman during his six-week stay about the worsening political situation. Lord Runciman always stressed his impartiality in this matter and conferred widely with Czech and Sudeten German politicians, whose company, his critics pointed out, he seemed to prefer to that of the Czechs.

In September 1938 Runciman wrote his final report. Quoted below are two excerpts.

Czech officials and Czech police, speaking little or no German, were appointed in large numbers to purely German districts; Czech agricultural colonists were encouraged to settle on land confiscated under the Land Reform in the middle of German populations; for the children of these Czech invaders Czech schools were built on a large scale; there is a very general belief that Czech firms were favoured as against German firms in the allocation of State contracts and that the State provided work and relief for Czechs more readily than for Germans. I believe these complaints to be in the main justified. Even as late as the time of my Mission, I could find no readiness on the part of the Czechoslovak Government to remedy them on anything like an adequate scale ... the feeling among the Sudeten Germans until about three or four years ago was one of hopelessness. But the rise of Nazi Germany gave them new hope. I regard their turning for help towards their kinsmen and their eventual desire to join the Reich as a natural development in the circumstances. (de Zayas, 2003, pp. 239-254)

According to Vyšný, (2003, p.314) Lord Runciman added

Further, it has become self-evident to me that those frontier districts between Czechoslovakia and Germany where the Sudeten population is in an important majority should be given full right of self-determination at once ... I consider, therefore, that those frontier districts should at once be transferred from Czechoslovakia to Germany, and further that measures for their peaceful transfer, including the provision of safeguards for the population during the transfer period, should be arranged forthwith by agreement between the two Governments.

Runciman was also critical of the Czechoslovak government when interviewed by the Methodist Recorder on 13 October 1938, " '... for their lack of understanding, petty acts of intolerance and discrimination against the German population' " (Vyšný, 2003, p.329). Before flying to London on 16 September, Lord Runciman visited President Beneš, who voiced his fear about his country being sacrificed. Runciman declared: " '... that the prime responsibility for sacrificing his country rested with Beneš himself ' " (Vyšný, 2003, p.303).

His findings would form the basis of the Western Powers' demands from Czechoslovakia for the cessation of the Sudeten region to Germany.

After Runciman's return he was praised by many quarters, and though there were critical voices, they were not in the majority. He and Chamberlain were regarded " ... as great practitioners of appeasement which had saved humanity from a devastating war." (Vyšný, 2003, p. 333). In retrospect, it is well known that "The Runciman Mission served to legitimise the demands of the SdP for self-determination" (Zimmermann, 1999, p. 62), providing an opportunity for Hitler to further his plans for the region and beyond.

3.13 The Munich Conference and the Annexation of Sudetenland

Neville Chamberlain, along with most of his Government, supported by France, was determined to try and prevent a war over what he called a quarrel in a "far away country". Britain and France had by then agreed to a secession of the Sudeten region and persuaded Czechoslovakia to give in. Chamberlain visited Hitler twice in Germany. First in Berchtesgaden, on 15 September 1938, then in Bad Godesberg on 22-23 September 1938, when Hitler demanded that the territory had to be evacuated at once (Agnew, 2004, p. 205).

Chamberlain broadcast to the people of Britain on 27 September 1938. An excerpt of the speech is included here as it vividly conveys his anguish and reflects the anxiety of the nation at the time:

First of all I must say something to those who have written to my wife or myself in these last weeks to tell us of their gratitude for my efforts and to assure us of their prayers for my success. Most of these letters have come from women -- mothers or sisters of our own countrymen. But there are countless others besides -- from France, from Belgium, from Italy, even from Germany, and it has been heartbreaking to read of the growing anxiety they reveal and their intense relief when they thought, too soon, that the danger of war was past.

If I felt my responsibility heavy before, to read such letters has made it seem almost overwhelming. How horrible, fantastic, incredible it is that we should be digging trenches and trying on gas masks here because of a quarrel in a far-away country between people of whom we know nothing. It seems still more impossible that a quarrel which has already been settled in principle should be the subject of war.

You know already that I have done all that one man can do to compose this quarrel.

(Chamberlain, 1939, pp. 274-6. Vyšný, 2005, St. Andrews, doc. 9).

Without the luxury of hindsight Chamberlain was no doubt convinced that he was acting in everyone's best interests, when he recorded the speech before Mussolini's proposal for the Four-Power conference at Munich. On 26 September 1938 Chamberlain appealed directly to Hitler for a meeting as did other world leaders and on September 28 1938. Hitler agreed to a conference in Munich the next day and on September 29, Chamberlain and the French premier Daladier accepted Hitler's demands that Czechoslovakia would surrender its frontier regions to Germany between 1 and 10 October (Agnew, 2004, p.205).

As the French and British Governments had already put pressure on Czechoslovakia from 19 September 1938 to cede the Sudetenland to the Reich, the proposal was reluctantly accepted by President Beneš and his Government on 21 September 1938. Suppan (2008, p. 7) writes,

“President Beneš and the Prague government ultimately capitulated and agreed to abide by the resolutions of the Munich Agreement, which had established the surrender of all Czechoslovak borderlands with majority German populations.”

Dr. Edvard Beneš, resigned and went into exile to Britain, ready to work on a plan for action after his return, which he felt sure would come. According to Vyšný (2003 p. 319), “Runciman had been ... highly critical of the President’s general attitude, speaking of his “ ‘... fatal habit of only responding to pressure when it was too late, ...’ ”

On the basis of Lord Runciman’s report to the British Government and after the Munich Conference the annexation of the Sudetenland by Hitler (1 October 1938) followed almost at once. Having been ordered to remain measured and helpful to the Czech military, between 1 and 10 October 1938 mobile units of the Wehrmacht crossed the borders from German and Austrian areas adjacent to Czechoslovak borders to occupy Sudetenland. While the Germans celebrated the Czechs were devastated and felt betrayed by the West. To this day this is regarded as one of the greatest disasters by the Czechs and the end of what many regard as an example of Czechoslovak western-style democracy and the fight against Fascist forces.

The situation was now unstoppable heading towards its final fateful outcome for the Germans of Czechoslovakia, having started with “Munich”, followed by the annexation of the Sudetenland the creation of the Protectorate by the Reich, the Second World War and the German Expulsions.

3.14 The Germans, the aftermath of “Munich” and the Annexation

Before the Munich agreement the already tense mood in the German areas of Czechoslovakia was heightened by feelings of insecurity and anxiety, fanned by wild rumours, which had created almost unbearable tensions and disquiet in the population. The annexation was followed by immense jubilation and the “liberation” of the Sudetenland moved even representatives of the Churches to send messages of gratitude to Hitler. The majority of the Sudeten population rejoiced, and political differences were pushed aside (Zimmermann, 1999, pp. 71-72).



9. Czechoslovakia after the annexation of Sudetenland (<http://www.sdz-online.com/>)

The joy shown by the population of Sudetenland has almost always been interpreted as a sign of support for the Nazi movement, almost as happiness to be in the Reich's national-socialist fold at last. However, what is usually not understood is, that for the German Bohemians of old and the inter-war Sudeten population, this was a price they had been willing to pay for gaining independence from Czechoslovakia. Generally, being part of Hitler's Germany was regarded as the lesser evil compared to being ruled by Czechs. It seemed that justice had finally arrived; that this was an illusion would soon become obvious. The pictures in the Appendix show some of the reactions of the Sudeten locals. Any criticism at that time would have been perceived as treason to their "Volk", which explains why many, previously doubtful about the merits of this political solution, kept their opinions to themselves.

According to Gebel (2000, pp. 275-276) 291,000 Czechs lived in the areas in the Sudetengau and 424,454 Germans in the central Czech areas. The figures are just estimates, as many Czechs opted for German citizenship in 1939. Petitions from German community leaders arrived immediately on Hitler's desk complaining about being outside the new boundaries as they too wished to be included in the new arrangement.

After the annexation the emotional high could not be shared by everybody. The situation would become disastrous for many who had previously opposed the political developments heading,

as they were, in an increasingly Fascist direction. Many Czech state employees as well as military personnel immediately left for the Czech interior, where they were redeployed. Jews, German Social Democrats, Communists and anti-Fascists hastily left for the remaining portion of Czechoslovakia, now reduced by nearly one-third (Suppan, 2008, p. 7). According to Zimmermann (1999, pp. 66-67), of the more than 726,416 Czechs (Czechoslovak Census 1930) who had up to then lived in Sudetenland, 25,000 left before the region was ceded to the Reich and in excess of 200,000 after that. As far as anti-Fascist Bohemian German refugees and Jews were concerned, their prospects were not improved by Czech officials in the interior returning train-loads of these back over the new border to an uncertain fate in the hands of the Reich's Security Services. The situation of the Jewish community was desperate, with the German position well known. The Czechs on the whole, did not show much compassion for their predicament, as many had always been considered to have identified with German interests and culture. Osterloh (2006, p. 201) and Glotz (2004, pp. 132-133) both refer to a "large number of suicides" among Jews. Specific numbers for 1938 could not be found partially because Jews had more often than not been previously registered as Czech or German.

3.15 The Influence of the National Socialist Regime

Sudeten Germans, the German Bohemians of old, as many older folk continued to call themselves after 1918, were proud of their own traditions and cultural and industrial achievements. Their dialects were a version of Austrian German, quite different from other Reich German areas, as was the character of the Bohemian Kingdom, now past history. This had always been a separate unit in the federation of German states within the Holy Roman Empire, and led by a Habsburg Emperor.

As previously mentioned, Sudeten Germans were from a different mould to Reich Germans, perfectly aware of their German - Slavic racially mixed background which had always been the norm in the multi-national Austro-Hungarian Empire. Nothing in NS racial theories could ever change that awareness among ordinary people and it is doubtful that the majority of Sudeten Germans would have agreed with Hitler's racial politics (Zimmermann, 1999, pp.116). It was after all not racial purity but rather the opposite, the multiple different influences from the East, West, North and South that had laid the foundations of the great cultural achievements of Central Europe under the Habsburgs. Hitler was always ashamed of his Austrian back-ground and contemptuous of the polyglot ethnic mix of the Viennese who, on the contrary, have always been aware and proud of it. Their great art, music and a generally agreeable attitude towards everything which makes life pleasant are still reminders of pre-1914 times.

Sudeten Germans, on the face of it supportive of the new regime, frequently showed ambivalent attitudes. Their criticism towards certain NS ideals, theories and practices would soon earn disapproval from Reich officials. Frictions occurred during "Gleichschaltung" (bringing into line) of Sudeten institutions with those in the Reich, which, according to eyewitnesses, made many Sudetendeutsche feel they were treated as if their homelands were a colony of the Reich. To the SdP and the general public it soon became obvious that the "Volksgemeinschaft" (their people's community) built up by them, had been split up into sections of Reich NS institutions such as the SA (Sturmabteilung), HJ (Hitler Jugend) etc. (Zimmermann, 1999, pp. 172 - 173). Zahra (2008, p. 186) demonstrates how Nazism in Bohemian lands was different, somewhat "Bohemianised", with Nazis and Sudeten nationalists striving for ideological and social goals which were parallel but not always identical. Ultimately though, the political and economic interests of Sudeten administrators were overridden by those of the Reich (Gebel, 2000, p. 217-218).

On 5 November 1938 Henlein's party was dissolved in a festive act at Reichenberg, followed by a declaration that the NSDAP would take its place. However, Hitler and other leading Nazis did not trust the 1.35 million Sudeten Germans who had previously been members of the SdP. They were perceived as covert separatists, therefore no automatic transfer into the NSDAP was possible for them without having shown their ideological commitment to the Nazi cause. The result was that in the end less than half of the former members of the SdP became members of the NSDAP (Gebel 2000, pp. 129-135).

One way or the other, NS ideology would have affected every family's life. Targeted "Familienpolitik" would aim to ensure families would be educated in what was expected of every member to be able to play his or her part in working towards a common golden future for all Germans. Women were expected to strive to be ideal mothers, to be capable, intelligent and well informed to raise the perfect family for the Reich.

Children's school life, meanwhile, would be dominated by indoctrination into the NS ethos embodied by the slogan "Ein Reich, ein Volk, ein Fuehrer". Teachers would frequently be in uniform, on class-room walls there would be pictures of the Fuehrer, slogans and banners with the swastika to encourage children to aspire to the virtues cherished by the NS movement. There would be much drumming in of the moral duty to strive for excellence, be utterly committed to the cause, unconditionally loyal, show self-discipline, and be hard and uncomplaining in the face of adversity. These concepts were familiar to Reich Germans, as they also reflected Protestant and Prussian virtues previously admired. But it should not be forgotten that the majority of Sudeten Germans were Catholics with an Austrian Bohemian mind-set and the civilian population did not react in quite the way Reich Germans expected. To them much of the Slav in the Sudeten mind-set, i.e not jumping immediately to execute orders or follow rigid principles, was too obvious.

After school the same message would be conveyed to their older siblings in the Hitler Jugend, (Hitler Youth), the HJ, and the Bund deutscher Maedel, (Association of German Girls), the BdM. Sports activities and competitions, hikes, camping trips, sleeping in the open under the stars, singing, dancing etc. were attractive aspects of the youth movements, all of which fostered a strong community spirit. Later many would look back to those days with some nostalgia, remembering the fun they had and the friendships they made. These memories would not necessarily have been a reflection of the underlying political purpose; the joy lay in the activities and the feeling of togetherness combined with the satisfaction of helping one's people (LeMO, interviews with those who took part, below).

The Hitler Jugend HJ (Hitler Youth) was created to instil the ideals of National Socialism into young people and to remove class differences. On 1 December, 1936 membership to the organisation in Germany became compulsory by law for 14-18 year-olds. For the majority of adolescents the political side of the movement mattered very little. However, they experienced its negative impact later, particularly towards the end of the war.

What appealed initially was the opportunity for social interaction and taking part in a range of attractive leisure pursuits, like cycling tours, sports, night hiking, camping as well as for example riding, or flying, not normally available to the majority of young people. The boys appreciated being offered vocational training in a range of engineering tasks, construction and craft skills (LeMo, Alltagsleben im NS-Staat, Jugend. Hitler Jugend).

Theo Schänker, born in 1926, claimed that boys perceived little difference between the games of cops and robbers played during the times of the German Empire and the open air games and sports of the Hitler Youth introduced after 1933. He also refers to the wide selection of interesting activities offered to adolescent boys. An additional attraction was that one could escape from being supervised by one's parents. (Schänker, 2000, paras 1-2, 5-7).⁴

Ursula Sabel born in 1924 writes about her time in the BdM (Bund deutscher Mädels). As a 15 year-old in 1939 she enjoyed meeting up with many other groups, taking part in boat trips on the Rhine, hiking in the beautiful countryside along the river Neckar and staying in youth hostels overnight, all of which she found wonderful. She described as sensational a late evening

⁴ Schänker, T. (2000). *Tausend Jahre*. Eye-witness contribution to "Kollektives Gedächtnis": Die Hitler Jugend (HJ). Berlin: LeMO. Retrieved 12 July, 2013 from http://www.dhm.de/lemo/forum/kollektives_gedaechtnis/040/index.html

performance of Schiller's "Die Räuber" in the beautifully illuminated ruin of Heidelberg castle (Sabel, 2000, para. 5).⁵

Of course there would also have been young people who felt differently and did not find having to be part of the HJ and BdM attractive or were excluded on account of race or their family's outlook being different on account of religion, or political orientation.

3.16 The Protectorate. The Nazi Regime and the Czechs

After Hitler's take-over of the Sudetenland his next step was to occupy the remaining central regions of Czechoslovakia and create "The Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia" (Map 10). On 14 March 1939 Hitler forced the new Czech president Emil Hácha to capitulate to his demands for a takeover of the central Czech areas. On March 15, German troops invaded Prague and Brno (Brünn). On 16 March 1939 Hitler proclaimed the creation of the Protectorate at the Castle in Prague.

During that time the German speaking areas in northern Bohemia were called Sudetengau, while those in southern Bohemia became Oberdonau and Niederdonau. Before 1939 approximately 30% of people living in the western section of Czechoslovakia, Bohemia, Moravia and Czech Silesia, counted themselves as Germans (Bryant, 2007, p. 3); now, only 20 years after the creation of Czechoslovakia the political power balance was again in favour of the German-speakers. However, they were not to know then how the Czechs and Jews were going to be affected and what lay in store for the German population after just six years.

Hitler had all along wanted to expand German "Lebensraum" (living- space) to the East and at the same time unite all Germans of the "Ostgebiete" (eastern regions) to free them from Slavic dominance. From his point of view the rest of Slavic Czechoslovakia jutting into the German language area (Map 10) would be a strategic obstacle in every way. He also viewed the rump of Czechoslovakia in a sea of German-speakers as an unwelcome bridge to the East facilitating the infiltration of Communism to the rest of Europe from Russia by Communist supporters. In

⁵ Sabel, U. (2000). Erlebnisse im BdM. Eye-witness contribution to 'Kollektives Gedächtnis': Die Hitler Jugend (HJ). Berlin: LeMO. Retrieved 12 July, 2013 from http://www.dhm.de/lemo/forum/kollektives_gedaechtnis/086/index.html

Both from LeMO. (continually updated website) *Erinnerungen. Kollektives Gedächtnis*. Beiträge bis Kriegsende 1945. Deutsches Historisches Museum Berlin. Beiträge ab 8. Mai 1945, Bonn, Germany: Haus der Geschichte der Bundesrepublik. Retrieved from www.dhm.de/lemo/home.html

1939 memories of the violence during and after the Russian Revolution of 1917 were still fresh in people's minds. At the time, only just over 20 years after that revolution, the aristocratic and other members of the German Bohemian elite had a horror of Russian politics and Bolshevism. Apart from the Communists these attitudes would also have been shared within the broad majority of the Sudeten German bourgeoisie. Having secured the Sudetenland, Reich-German propaganda now focused on the rights of the considerable number of German-speakers who had been living in the Czech heartland since Habsburg times. In 1940 there were about 225,000 Germans living outside the annexed area, 42,000 in Prague, 52,000 in Bruenn (Brno), and the rest in the countryside.



10 Pre-First World War German majority areas (blue)

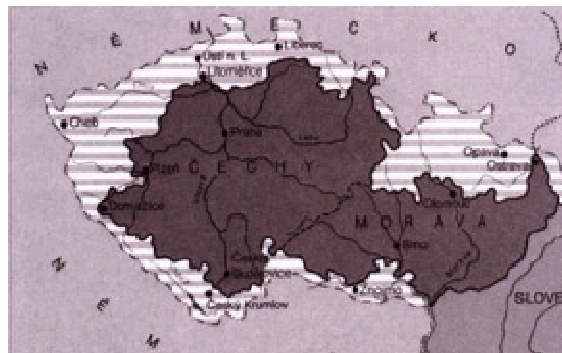
Overy, R. (Ed.). (1993). Languages, peoples and political divisions of Europe. In *Times Atlas of World History*. 4th edition. London: BCA, Times Books, p. 210.)

Also shown above are the German majority areas east of the Oder-Neisse line until 1945: Silesia, Pomerania, West and East Prussia.

For Hitler the Munich Agreement was the first step towards the realisation of what he regarded as his historic mission, his grandiose quest for the future of all Germans in Central and Eastern Europe, uniting all Germans under the umbrella of the Reich, instead of being under the “boot” of Slavs. However, as is rarely understood abroad, for many Germans and Austrians those

ideas were not the inspiration for their support but the hope for an improvement or even reversal of the Versailles territorial settlements. After the First World War the realignment of German and Austrian borders in favour of Poland and Czechoslovakia had created inter-war instability on several fronts; now there was again hope that the previous order could be restored. Meanwhile the German economy was showing impressive signs of improvement, ending long-term unemployment and misery for many.

Who knows whether the coexistence of the two populations, Czech and Germans could not have remained stable after 1918, if the relevant political and social powers of both nationalist camps had shown pragmatism instead of a lack of willingness to disregard their national position (Zimmermann, 2002, para. 1)?



11 Sudetenland (1938) and The Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, 1939 -1945 (black)

(Das deutsche Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren 1939-45. Oschliess, 2011)

(www.zukunft-braucht-erinnerung.de/ Informationsportal des Arbeitskreis Shoa.de)

The protectorate, now de facto under NS German rule, was aided by a Czech administration, and overseen by a Czech puppet government. With no other option but to be compliant to Hitler's directives, it tried to do its best for its citizens under the strictures imposed by Nazi rule. The economic exploitation of the country in support of the German war effort had now been made possible.

3.17 Collaboration – Resistance

Hitler's opinion of the Czechs according to Hamann (1999) was that they were the most dangerous of all Slavs: diligent, disciplined and orderly, they were nonetheless an "alien" splinter within the German "folkdom". Referring to their national aspirations in Imperial times,

Hitler was of the opinion that the Habsburgs had failed because they tried to solve the problem through kindness (Hamann, 1999). As is well known, he would not make the same mistake, but also stated repeatedly that Czechs and Germans would have to find ways of getting along (Gebel, 2000, p. 284) which did indeed happen in many cases. The American diplomat George Kennan remarked at the time “It became difficult to tell where the Czech left off and the German began” (King 2002, p. 176).

The new leaders quickly established their regime, and ensured domestic peace, mostly due to SS-engineered terror aiming to eliminate existing and potential enemies and frightening the population into submission (Bryant, 2007, p. 34). The Czechs were relegated to a lower legal status, and social, cultural, educational, sporting, and professional associations including the Boy Scouts and the Sokol were suspended or banned (Agnew, 2004, p. 210). Harsh punitive measures against perceived opposition created tensions, feelings of humiliation, terror and helplessness in the Czechs. In 1940, a year after the war had started, it also became clear that if Germany won it, Nazi victory would mean the implementation of plans for Germanisation, which would bring about the physical destruction of the Czech nation through assimilation, deportation, colonisation and extermination (Luža, 1964, p.190).

Though depressed at being controlled by a foreign power, with their lives strictly regulated, those who toed the line were not in any immediate danger. Nazi political terror was mainly directed against members of resistance groups and the intelligentsia, as they were considered opinion-forming elements, and would be targeted if they did not follow the Reich's line. The Czech political and intellectual elite, the Communists, Czech and German Anti-fascists, the Jews, and anyone suspected or actually engaged in resistance activities would, with their families become subject to considerable pressure and suffering. Those who were unable to leave would be in constant danger of imprisonment, some losing their lives through torture and/or execution, others perishing on forced marches, and in concentration camps.

The impression of a conspicuous lack of national fervour within the ranks of ordinary people is reinforced by the Czech historian Vojtěch Mastný (1971) who refers to the Czech reaction, or rather the lack of it, as not even warranting a major German military presence as the Czechs had not been psychologically or militarily prepared to resist the occupation violently (Frommer 2005, p. 19).

To convey something of the attitude taken by many Czechs to the change in their circumstances, Prof. Wolf Oschlies points to a motto for the future, quoted from the Prague daily paper, Lidové noviny, from 4 October, 1938, “ ‘If we cannot sing with the angels, then we will howl with the wolves’ “ (Oschlies, 2011. para : Alltag im Protektorat. shoa.de). In other words, while under Nazi rule they were forced to make the best of their circumstances. Opposition as well as working within the system were both going to be part of life in occupied Czechoslovakia. In respect of collaborating or not, it would soon become very difficult not to

cross the line between necessary cooperation and treasonous accommodation, "Life in the Protectorate continued in spite of war and selective Nazi terror and repression ... For most people the need to find food, carry out daily activities, and live their lives under enemy occupation placed them in a grey zone between their circumstances and their preferences" (Agnew, 2004, p. 214).

In his essay on the practicalities of daily existence in Bohemia and Moravia, Oschlies refers to the Czech historian Petr Koura who in 2002 said in an interview on Czech Radio ' "... that in spite of the time of the Protectorate being a rather difficult and bloody time, life went on, people lived surrounded by culture, took part in sport activities, including competitions, there were theatre performances and films were being made." ' The continuing everyday normality was astonishing, in general ordinary folk worked during the day, and went out in the evening and hiked at weekends. However, there were obviously many others who had a rather less "normal" life as is recorded by Czech respondent 2MC who lived in the Protectorate just over the Sudetengau border near Gablonz. Her family were constantly frightened and very aware of living under a dictatorship.

Initially, under the watchful eye of the German security services, supported "...by informants from all sections of society" (Bryant, 2007, p. 62), many Czechs adopted a "wait and see" attitude and chose "... unobtrusive alignment with the new regime" (Glutz, 2004, p.165).

Frommer points to a willingness of an unknown number of Czechs to collaborate by denouncing their Jewish co-citizens. He argues that "... ordinary Czechs contributed to the Holocaust denouncing compatriots who failed to respect Nazi prohibitions on conducts with Jews and inter-married Gentiles" (Frommer, 2005, p. 10).

However, towards the end of the war and beyond, with Beneš's and Stalin's encouragement, propaganda would change many Czechs' passivity to aggression. Particularly young Czechs were subsequently activated towards revenge against German civilians. As the West was somewhat discredited after "Munich", the influence of the Soviet Union grew and Czech attitudes shifted to the left. With the Soviets as well as the influence of the Czech government-in-exile supporting the Resistance, resentments stored up against the German regime, would lead to an explosion of reckoning in 1945.

Meanwhile six years of German rule affected all aspects of life in the occupied territories. By 1943 there were an estimated 400,000 Czechs in the overwhelmingly German Sudetengau, Partially for employment reasons many would have declared themselves as Germans. 100,000 persons were thought to have been of floating allegiance (Gebel, p. 276), what Bryant (2007, p. 28) called a "Hopelessly Mixed People" referring to Czechs, Germans and Jews. This also applied to the mainly Czech core area, the Protectorate, where in excess of 200,000 ethnic Germans had lived since Habsburg times, particularly in and around the language islands of

Bruenn (Brno), Iglau (Jihlava) and Olmuetz (Olomouc). Prague had a German majority up to the end of the 18th century. Czech words had infiltrated the German language (Bryant 2007, p. 55), and to this day the German spoken by the Viennese includes many Slavic and Jewish words.

The first two years of the occupation passed relatively calmly with only sporadic signs of resistance. However, after the arrival of the new acting Reich Protector, Heydrich in 1941, the situation dramatically worsened. While terror measures like mass arrests, executions, prison and transportation to concentration camps were aimed at eliminating opposing elements, life was made easier for ordinary Czechs working in the industries important to the Reich. These conditions were deliberately and selectively improved to keep workers well fed, fit and willing to cooperate in support of the German war effort.

At this stage it is appropriate to introduce two figures who were active in this respect. Their effect on the population of Bohemia and Moravia left an indelible mark, particularly on the collective memories of the Czechs and Jews.

3.18 Reinhard Heydrich and Karl Hermann Frank – the situation of the Czechs

Strategies to ensure victory for the Reich

Reinhard Heydrich arrived in Prague on 27 September 1941 to replace his elderly predecessor, Reich Protector Konstantin von Neurath as Acting Reich Protector. As Chief of the Nazi Criminal Police, the SS, all Security Services, and the Gestapo (Geheime Staatspolizei), he was for 18 months the ruthless ruler of Nazi-occupied Bohemia and Moravia, and was responsible for some of the worst Nazi atrocities. After his assassination, the only Sudeten German ever to reach political importance under the Nazis, Karl Hermann Frank⁶, became Secretary of State for Bohemia/Moravia. He continued to ensure that the Protectorate served the German war effort at full capacity. His close ties to and cooperation with the security services, particularly the SS, secured total German control in the occupied areas. To the Czechs and the world both men are widely recognized as iconic villains of the twentieth century, even within a Nazi context.

As the war had drawn off many of the available German men of working age, the country's Czech workforce became absolutely indispensable to the Reich. Where it was not already in situ, it was trained up, often in Germany, and used to work for the Reich's requirements.

⁶ Karl Hermann Frank (1898-1946) was a Sudeten German politician who throughout his career pursued a radical National Socialist approach from the early 1930s in the Henlein movement and subsequently as Secretary of State to the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia until 1945.

Heydrich was a keen supporter of vocational training placements for Czechs as well as awards of scholarships to German Universities (Glötz 2004, p.145).

Armament Production for the Third Reich

Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia had been the industrial engine of the former Habsburg monarchy, afterwards interwar Czechoslovakia ranked among the most advanced industrialised countries in the world. From 15 March 1939 the German occupation forces incorporated 92% of the industrial production of Czechoslovakia into the Reich of which 70% was located in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (1939-1945) and 22% in the borderlands annexed by Germany.

The Protectorate's resources, a gift for the Reich, were commandeered to be exploited for Hitler's war. Between 1939 and 1945 Czech heavy industry, steel foundries and arms factories, alongside those located in Germany, became prime armaments producers for the Reich. Meanwhile the fertile Czech heartland supplied agricultural produce till the end of the war. With these resources available, Heydrich excelled at formulating methods in order to get maximum productivity from the Czech workforce for Germany to win the war. Heavy investment by Germany accompanied the Reich's participation in most branches of industry, particularly in the production of armaments and weapons (Teichova, 1998, p.273, p.287), one of the most advanced in Europe at the time.

To escape potential bombing several German armament producers were relocated to the Protectorate, and subsequently interlinked with the main Czech producers in this category. These were the Škoda works in Pilsen, the weapons plant in Bruenn as well as the production units in Vsetin, Strakonice and those underground near Tisnov. U-boat canons, flak-guns, parts for the V1 and V2 and aircraft components were produced (von Arburg, 2000, pp. 32-33) as well as tank models 15(t) and 18(t) and their variants ['t' stands for 'tschechisch' - Czech] (Forty, 1988, p. 50-52). The monthly output of the Škoda works was 96 canons and 120 flak guns, at the same time the Bruenn factory produced 30,000 rifles and 3,000 automatic rifles, and Strakonice 144 infantry canons and 10,800 pistols (Brandes, 1994, p. 50). The X2 Škoda works in Pilsen were very important throughout the Second World War, not only as producers for artillery vehicles but also being instrumental in the production of fighter aircraft as well as in the maintenance of all machinery. By Spring 1945 products manufactured by Škoda amounted to almost 30% of all weapons delivered to the German Army.

Troop numbers in Sudetenland and the Protectorate

Between 1 and 10 October 1938, approximately 24 divisions of the Wehrmacht crossed the borders from German and Austrian areas adjacent to Czechoslovak borders. One division is usually made up of between 10,000 – 30,000 soldiers. In the first wave of occupation one

infantry division would be expected to have 534 officers, 2701 of sub-officer rank (Unteroffiziere), 14,397 ordinary soldiers and 102 officials.

In the Protectorate, meanwhile, Kuepper (2010, p. 151) refers to an estimate by Kural (1994, p. 56) of approximately 200,000 troops stationed. These were mainly training and reserve units of the Wehrmacht. In the footnote 118 on p.151 the number of 150,000 is mentioned in a report of the Sicherheitsdienst (SD) dated 11 November, 1939. Military training grounds were expanded in 1941 according to Brandes (2012, pp. 148-177) with troop numbers fluctuating, but estimated at their highest before 1940.⁷

Forty (1988, p. 50.) quotes an interesting Czech offer of military cooperation after Hitler's occupation. A certain Colonel Icke of the 6th Panzer Regiment charged with checking the suitability of the Czech battle tanks LT vz 35 is quoted as saying that in 1939, after the occupation of Prague

... the Czech officers believed they would be recruited by the German armed forces, but this was something we could not confirm. They were therefore very interested in this possibility and pointed out that such an arrangement had existed in the Austria-Hungary Empire. It must be said that our co-operation with the Czechs was excellent and showed hardly any restraint. There was never any friction, acts of sabotage or any resistance.

After all, only 20 years had passed since 1918, when Czech and Germans had been part of the same European melting pot that was the Habsburg Empire.

Heydrich was initially focused on what he deemed necessary for the continuation of the Reich's racial objectives, and planned to introduce policies aimed at Germanising "suitable" Czechs and sterilising or deporting the remainder. However, Sudeten Germans had never been in favour of

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any application of race laws to Czechs. They were aware of their mixed Central European genetic heritage and did not believe themselves to be "... a separate Sudeten German race, capable of assimilating the Czechs" (Gebel, 2000, p. 306).⁸

Soon, however, Heydrich's plans were shelved in favour of prioritising the use of the Czech workforce for the benefit of the Reich's war objectives. Gustav von Schmoller (1979, p. 627-645) gives a vivid account of Heydrich's strategies which Agnew (2002, p. 212) describes as the "carrot and stick policy", known in German as "Zuckerbrot und Peitsche".

Immediately after his arrival he announced harsh emergency measures to suppress the resistance movements in Bohemia–Moravia. He ordered mass arrests and executions, details of which were publicised via broadcasts, press reports and placards listing the names of victims. Within the first two months of being in office 4000 people had been arrested and 400 death sentences carried out. His strategy succeeded into frightening the Czech population into submission so as not to be disruptive and interfere with his main priority, to keep the workers productive for the German war effort.

Employment – Wages - Rations

To achieve his goal Heydrich was determined to improve working and living conditions for all workers in the heavy industries. To this end he worked on establishing good relations with the workers' union in the armament and related metal industries as well as with the representatives of agricultural workers to maximise food production. In order to establish what needs had to be met he instigated meetings in factories encouraging workers to speak openly about any problems or needs they might have.. On 24 October 1941 he met union representatives at the Prague Castle, went from table to table, greeting them individually by shaking hands, and listened to reports of difficulties they were facing. Subsequently he was praised in the papers published by the unions that for the first time something was actually done, which had not happened in the previous 20 years, a reception of a workers' delegation in the Castle of Prague. A year later wages had risen faster than prices and social insurance as well as unemployment benefit had reached the same level as in the Reich. In respect of the armament industry German visitors expressed their surprise that there were fewer sabotage acts in the Protectorate than in German factories (von Schmoller, 1979. pp. 641-643).

Robert Gerwarth (English version, 2011, p. 242) also states that workers in the armaments industries received higher food and tobacco rations, better welfare services, free shoes, paid holidays and for a time Saturdays off. Food rations for Czechs and Germans in the Protectorate

⁸ It was widely known among Sudeten Germans that Konrad Henlein, the man they had endorsed in the May elections of 1938, was half-Czech through his mother, therefore no Aryan of the Nazi concept.

were roughly the same as in the Reich, with the exception of fat, which was allocated in smaller amounts. This was compensated by higher rations of flour, sugar and milk in line with Czech food habits. It was rumoured that an increase in fat rations for the armament workforce, introduced in October 1941, were due to Heydrich' personal efforts with the Ministry of Food and Nutrition in Berlin (von Schmoller 1979, p. 644; Deschner, 1977, p. 235).

Though life was hard and unpredictable, for many Czechs, after years of high unemployment, there was now full employment as well as higher wages than before. Czechs, like all available Germans, were required to work by law, but enjoyed the same benefits. There were also new perks for Czech workers, such as free lunches in factories, vocational classes, personal injury, health and old age insurance programmes, as well as organized sporting events, and affordable tickets to concerts, films, and the theatre (Frommer, 2005, p. 15).

As "A large part of the Czech population began to enjoy uncommon prosperity" (Zeman & Klimek, 1997, p. 191), they also lived on an island sheltered from war (Bryant 2007, p. 2). Deaths from executions or from disease in concentration camps are estimated to have been between 36,000 and 55,000 (less than 1% of the population), which represent great human suffering but are lower than war-time losses of other nations (Agnew, 2004, p. 215). Therefore the scale and brutality of post-war Czech retribution against Germans and their domestic collaborators appears rather surprising in view of relatively low casualty rates for Czech Gentiles (Frommer, 2005, p. 26).

Forced Labour

Unemployment among Czechs had been a persistent pre-war problem, though never as bad as for the Germans in the industrial areas of the Sudetenland. To escape this situation, 30,000 Czechs immediately applied for jobs in Germany at the start of the occupation. According to Ulrich Herbert (1997, p. 55) foreign workers had poured into Germany in large numbers even before the war, those from Czechoslovakia being the most numerous ahead of the Poles.

The pre-war numbers of workers from Czechoslovakia voluntarily working in Germany (Herbert, 1997, p. 51):

1936 67,784

1937 81,296

1938 105,493

Initially, therefore, until the obligation to work became an absolute duty, often referred to as forced labour, this was for many Czechs not necessarily what the name implies, because of the pre-existing pattern of working in Germany. By 1944 there were 280,273 Czechs working in the Reich (Herbert, 1997, p. 298). Eckart Reidegeld (2006, p. 553) tells us that the number called

up for labour duty from the Protectorate, called "Arbeitseinsatz", grew to 313 890 by August-September of 1944.

"Though the authorities had the power to draft labour after 1 December 1939, they delayed forcing Czech workers to serve outside the Protectorate" (Agnew, 2004, p. 211). However, once the war had started, the need for workers in Germany increased and it became compulsory for young Czech men, born 1922-5 and women, 1924-5 to be part of organised work schemes (Herbert, 1997, p. 281). They were sent to Germany to do a variety of jobs to replace German serving soldiers. In addition to skilled workers employed where their skills were needed, others' task was to clear up after bombing raids, always in danger of being killed themselves.

It is interesting to note that in 2000, survivors encouraged to apply for compensation payments from Germany did not refer to any feelings of hate or profound resentments, as might have been expected. Apart from being at the mercy of some over-zealous guards, they spoke of often having met kindness and having sympathised with the suffering of the German civilian population as a result of the bombing (Havlíková & Vondryšková, 2004). Meanwhile, whereas the German population in Czechoslovakia decreased due to war time losses by 180,000 - 200,000 (Zimmermann, 2002), the Czech birth rate rose to 236,000 births, registered during the Reich's occupation (Frommer, 2005, p. 24).

With higher wages in the Reich's Sudetengau than in the Protectorate (Gebel, 2000, p. 321) it was particularly attractive for Czechs to work there. Though overall numbers of Czechs there at any one time are difficult to determine, Gebel (2000, p. 276),) estimates the figure to have been approximately 400,000, including 200,000 indigenous Czechs. In 1943 roughly 100 000 Czechs were assumed to have been of opportunistic floating ethnic allegiance.

In 1942, Karl Hermann Frank⁹ summed up Nazi policy in the Protectorate:

He who works for the Reich - and the great majority of the population does so - has nothing to fear; his material existence and future are assured. He who stands aside, holds back or secretly sabotages, belongs to the camp of the enemy and will be cut down according to the law of war. (Frommer, 2005, p. 15)

Many Czechs acted accordingly, because not everybody was overly nationalistic, many got on perfectly well with their German neighbours, work mates, colleagues while many had family ties with Germans going back generations. At the time there were about 35-40,000 mixed marriages in Sudetenland alone (Gebel, 2000, p. 305), with an unknown number in the Protectorate.

⁹ Karl Hermann Frank ((1898-1946) was a Sudeten German politician who throughout his career pursued a radical National Socialist approach at first in respect of pre-war Sudeten politics and after 1939 as Secretary of State for the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.

Though there was cruel repression against any signs of opposition, largely due to the policies of Heydrich and Frank, who continued Heydrich's vicious policies, the majority of the Czech population had no choice but to be pragmatic and wait, not expecting the war to last forever.

While Hitler's and Goebbels's speeches continuously extolled the virtues of belonging to a big empire with all the advantages of its army and navy, they also stressed that Czech culture was well regarded and would be protected. The attitudes of the new regime were encapsulated in a speech by Goebbels on 11 September 1940 to Czechoslovakian artists and journalists visiting Berlin. He emphasised the importance of the new order in Europe and the need for the Czech intelligentsia not just to support it but to give a lead to their people, but left them in no doubt what would be more advantageous, to be the Reich's friend or its enemy.

The Resistance

Although Czech nationalist and communist groups were active in the Czech Resistance, the Germans were never effectively challenged. By 1942 the resistance organisations represented in ÚVOD (Ústřední, výbor odboje domácího), had been almost totally infiltrated and completely neutralised, and were unable to play a significant role until the end of the war (Glantz, 2004, p.165).

The largest groups were the Obrana národa, ON, The Nation's Defence (a coalition of many smaller ones willing to cooperate with the military command of the Czechoslovakian government-in-exile), the Politické ústředí, PÚ, (politicians sympathetic to Edvard Beneš), Petiční výbor Věrní zůstaneme, PVVZ, The Committee of the Petition "We Remain Faithful" (Social Democrats and Leftists). The Central Leadership of the Home Resistance was known as the Ústřední vedení odboje domácího, ÚVOD. The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, KSČs, worked independently and intensified its activities in line with increasing Soviet-Czech cooperation. It was critical of the other resistance movements as well as of President Beneš and the West.

Radomir Luža (Luža & Vella, 2002, p.19, p. 26), describes the beginnings of the resistance movements in 1939 from first-hand experience. His father, a general, and the Czech Prime Minister Eliáš agreed that the work of the resistance was not to instigate futile uprisings but to gather intelligence and smuggle it abroad. He tells us how the organisers of resistance groups, mostly military men, somewhat naively started meeting almost publically in coffee houses, working on files and making up membership lists while considering "...far-fetched plans for igniting a mass revolt against the occupiers." However, the need for secrecy for the long years ahead soon became obvious. Obrana národa, ON, almost the largest resistance group in Europe, was wiped out in 1939 by the Gestapo after just a few months when almost all its members were arrested. After that clandestine cells of a few people were considered more

useful to the Resistance. Throughout the war, all these groups gathered intelligence for both the Western Allies and the Soviet Union (Luža, 1964, pp. 214-216).

Jaroslava Milotová also tells us that from the time the Resistance started in 1939 all resistance groups had been immediately under acute pressure. This was not just due to the Gestapo but to the NS authorities and the administration generally, aided by a system of spies as well as brutal collective measures against sabotage and demonstrations. Incompletely preserved documents from the Prague State Police Headquarters show that 35,721 persons were investigated during the 6 years of the occupation and prosecuted for high treason (Hochverat) for activities hostile to the Reich (reichsfeindliche Taetigkeit). 32,000 were held in the prison of the Gestapo in Terezin from 1940, almost half of those were arrested on account of resistance activities (Milotová (2011, pp. 157-167).

On 4 February 1942, Acting Reich Protector Heydrich had confidently announced, rather too soon “ ‘We have destroyed the resistance at a time, when it was not yet in a position to gain influence over the masses to any great degree’ ” (Glotz, 2004, p. 145).

During the war the Czechoslovak government-in-exile in London kept in radio contact with the national resistance movements though there were some long periods of interruptions, particularly after 1941. To their politicians the situation at home seemed rather too untroubled, and to their embarrassment, they were challenged from all sides about their population not showing the same spirit of resistance as was the case in France or Poland. Something had to be done, “... lest the Allies think the Czechs were willing collaborators” (Agnew, 2004, p. 212). The world needed to take notice that this was not the case. The idea to stage an assassination attempt against Deputy Reich Protector Heydrich was conceived, even though a certain Prof. Vaněk, prominent in one of the resistance groups, and others sent urgent warnings to London not to go ahead with the plan, as the result would do nothing for the Allied cause, but would result in dreadful reprisals, causing many deaths and obliterate all future chances for opposition (Glotz, 2004, p. 152-154).

Against this advice, the assassination plan was put into action in May 1942 by two parachutists trained and armed by Britain, and supported by the resistance organisation Jindra after landing on Czech soil. Heydrich’s car was blown up and he was fatally wounded. The most successful resistance operation in Bohemia and Moravia, it led to brutal reprisals a few days later which resulted in the complete destruction of the villages of Lidice and Léžaky and hundreds of deaths and deportations to concentration camps; typically similar events unfolded every time after successful partisan operations.

Even the atrocities of Lidice and Léžaky did not seem to stir up the great emotional reaction, hoped for by the government in exile. But it was a useful propaganda coup used to show the terrible consequences of Nazi rule and the need for later retribution and revenge. This Nazi

atrocities were to become a powerful propaganda tool for the Czech government-in-exile with which to influence world opinion into supporting Beneš's plans for the later expulsion of all Germans (Glötz, 2004, p.160).

After Heydrich's death and subsequent reprisals, the resistance in Bohemia and Moravia had largely been put out of action by the end of 1942. However, from summer 1943 more systematic actions were undertaken by small groups of partisans, such as parachute missions directly supported by Moscow under the supervision of the Komintern's executive committee. These clearly had the desired effect as Secretary of State, Karl Hermann Frank, had to admit in a speech in the Sudetengau on 30 March 1944 that it had not been possible to eliminate all resistance activities in spite of Heydrich's previous strategies. He also predicted an increase in partisan activity which might precede an uprising, an event for which he had had to take unprecedented security measures including immediate executions for subversive activities.

Karl Hermann Frank

Karl Hermann Frank's important but sinister role as Secretary of State began after the assassination of Reinhard Heidrich. A Sudeten German from Karlsbad, his rise to power started in October 1936 when he became Henlein's deputy, continuing to emphasize his message for a radical National Socialist approach to be pursued by the SdP. At that time the traditionalists of "Heimat"- and "Volkstum"- orientated members of the "Kameradschaftsbund" (KB) had not fully committed themselves in that direction. Frank, however, and like-minded patriots in the so-called "Aufbruch Kreis", vigorously advocated a radical National Socialist pro-Reich attitude, in preference to what he and other radicals considered a narrow, separatist patriotic view only centred on the Sudetenland (Zimmermann, 2002, pp. 47-48). This was always a source of annoyance to the radicals and points to the Bohemian/Sudeten mind-set as being different to a Pan-German one.

After Henlein had largely disappeared into obscurity Karl Hermann Frank rose to a position of significant importance, the only Sudeten German among political figures in the Reich (Kuepper, 2010, p.1). Reviled not only as a Nazi but as a Sudetendeutsch Nazi for his subsequent actions in the Protectorate, he became an unparalleled figure of hate for the national suppression and terror of the Czech people between March 1939 and May 1945 (Luza, 2002, p. 24; Zimmermann, 1999, p. 47-48).

Though Frank was nominally subordinate to the office of the Reich Protector, his position as Secretary of State as well as being the highest-ranking officer of the Protectorate SS and the German police allowed him all the powers necessary to serve his Fuehrer and assist Germany to win the war. He used repression and terror as the most effective instruments to achieve his aims which he encapsulated in three words: *security, order* and *productivity* (Kuepper, 2010, p. 342). His commitment to Germany's war effort resulted in a reign of terror which had started in

1939 with the execution of a group of students in the aftermath of a peaceful demonstration against the German occupation and continued to the end of the war. He ultimately bore the responsibility for thousands of arrests and death sentences, the atrocities of Lidice and Ležáky, multiple deportations to concentration camps and the use of Czechs for enforced labour in war-time Germany.

On 22 May 1946, a year after the war had ended, he was executed after a public trial by hanging in front of 5000 spectators in Prague's Pankrác prison. His trial was not just treated as that of a single war criminal but of a leading Nazi, the product of the collective criminality of the German minority in Czechoslovakia and a symbol of the collective guilt of the entire German nation (Frommer, 2005, pp. 233-234). Excerpts of his speeches are included in the next chapter.

3.19 The Situation of the Czechoslovak Germans

After the annexation

The annexation had initially delivered a satisfactory outcome for the Sudeten population, but the satisfaction of no longer being part of Czechoslovakia but of the Reich instead was not to last. Unwelcome adjustments had to be made to meet the requirements of the new regime, with Nazi ideology having to be accommodated, and affecting almost every aspect of life. Now under strict Reich German rule, rather different from the pre-1918, more pragmatic German-Austrian approach, Bohemians were frequently treated as inferiors by some condescending and bullying Reich Germans (Gebel, 2000, p. 96; Zimmermann, 1999, pp.119-182). The often contentious attitude and interference by newly-appointed Reich officials created annoyance in the Bohemian German population; many were relegated to inferior positions, particularly in the administrative sector. The reorganisation of the administration, business and industrial structures had a detrimental effect on the economy as the anticipated recovery was slow in coming. Wages in Sudetenland, though higher than in the Protectorate, were lower than in the Reich which created resentment. In the aftermath of the Depression there was still poverty and deprivation added to by an acute housing shortage and just a short time later hopes of a better future had to be abandoned as the Second World War started. Sudeten Germans felt their region was ill equipped to be involved in another war yet again, not least because their economy had been severely weakened during the years of the Depression. After the start of the Russian campaign, Operation Barbarossa on 22 June 1941, many more soldiers were required causing man power shortages in vital industries. As elsewhere the Sudeten German population had to bear rapidly rising losses of their men folk (Franzel, 1979, p. 17), with women, children and old people left to cope with a considerably increased workload and economic burden, not to mention the emotional effects on families.

Unlike conditions in the fertile Czech heartland, circumstances in the mountainous northern borderlands, with poor infertile soils and dense woodland interspersed with large boulders prevented the majority of the population from making a living from either forestry or agriculture. Therefore cottage industries from the 19th century and before had always had to supplement family incomes. Bohemian workers were behind the considerable industrial boom towards the end of Austrian Imperial times which, as mentioned before, had transformed the region into one of the most highly developed manufacturing areas in the world before the First World War.

After the annexation Sudeten thriftiness and modest way of living were noticed with amusement by Reich Germans who tended to ridicule their supposed discipline in observing Reich war-time directives to civilians. Having been “liberated” from the Czech “yoke”, the Sudeten Germans felt obliged but thought they were undervalued. In 1942 the district governor of Asch complained in a situation report that it was exceptionally offensive how Sudeten Germans were described “as good-natured cretins” in a widely used book for citizenship studies in vocational schools (Gebel, 2002, p.306).

Towards the end of the war

After the annexation, and early on in the war, the Germans' mood in general was kept high by skilful propaganda, also as a result of early military successes, but dipped steadily thereafter. After France's collapse there was a desire for the war to end, as it was thought there would be an opportunity to reach a settlement with the Allies. After the defeat of the German 6th Army at Stalingrad, in January 1943, dark foreboding about the final outcome of the war took hold.

By now war-induced struggles and sacrifices had taken their toll. The German population was not aware how desperate their situation was soon going to be, one was not expected to doubt victory and had to show calm; to spread rumours was a punishable offence. However, “After years of anxious tranquillity” ... (Frommer, 2005, p. 28), disquiet started to creep in about how Germans would be affected after the end of the war. Stories about violence and rapes, told by people fleeing ahead of the Russians from areas further East, as well as barely veiled Czech threats of what was about to happen, started to cause agitation within the Bohemian German population. Nazi propaganda was losing its potency by that time, but still went some way towards keeping hopes up with promises of the imminent use of a wonder weapon. It was a time of great tension for German families as the Sudeten civilian population began to realise that they would be caught between the Red Army's advance from the east, and Czech aggression at home, which was exactly what happened. The stress suffered by the German civilians and their distress displayed quite openly is described on p. 216 of the Meissner Chronik (Archive Jablonec) where the Germans anxieties in the district of Gablonz are described.

It may not commonly be known that Protectorate Czechs and Sudeten Germans had largely been kept strictly separate, each in their settlement areas (Richter, 2013, p. 145). Most Sudeten Germans were under the impression that the Reich's occupation had been more or less "benign" for the Czech population, even to their advantage. The Germans in Sudetenland had little idea of how life was continuing for the Czechs in the Protectorate, as its border to the Sudetengau became a Staatsgrenze (state border) and was closed after 15 March 1939. It remained a Staatsgrenze right up to the collapse of the Nazi regime, only its limitations as a customs boundary were lifted on 18 September 1940. It was almost impossible for the general public to get permission to travel across it unless it was deemed necessary by the authorities or as a result of an official order from Reich officials. Nobody could cross the border without a "Durchlassschein" (pass). The regulations were as follows:

1. Entering or leaving the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia ... is only allowed by a Durchlassschein (pass) after special permission by the authorities.
2. Requests for a Durchlassschein have to be submitted to the local district police authority.
3. Durchlassscheine will only be issued in circumstances warranted in relation to the war effort. In individual cases the strictest criteria have to be observed before permission is granted for a Durchlassschein.
4. Anyone found to have crossed the border without permission will be subject to a fine, arrest or sent to prison according to clause 5 - pass regulations - 27 May 1942.

These regulations were re-issued as late as 1944 by the office of the Reichsfuehrer - SS and Head of Security (Richter, 2013, pp.145-146).

The trips to Prague from Sudetengau by the diarist Dr. Ewald Mayer, an example of cross-border travel, documented in an interesting article by Cornwall (2007, pp. 139-140) would have fulfilled the criteria set out above as he had received an official order to travel to Prague to join the Organisation Todt.

3.20 The Bohemian Jews

The Jews, an important and culturally integrated part of the German and Czech Bohemian population, accounted for 180,535 people (1.35%) in the Census of 1921 and were " ... mostly German speaking and German-voting; in spite of the anti-Semitism of so many Germans it is remarkable to what extent Central European Jews clung to a German orientation ... (Wiskemann 1967, p.125). They were active in German cultural associations and there were examples where Jews were actually vehemently fighting quasi for the "German Volkstum" and

against czechification and discrimination against Germans in schools. Many Jews had also experienced anti-Semitism from the Czechs in the past (Wlaschek, 1997, p. 52, p. 60).

Racial ambiguity previously mentioned in relation to Czechs and Germans also applied to the Jews, of whom many had adopted a nationally indifferent outlook generations ago. Ultimately they were doomed to suffer whether they defined their identity as Czech, or German or separately as Jews.

In the first years of Henlein's leadership of the SdP signs of anti-Semitism were rare. However, the situation would deteriorate and peak during the pre-Munich period when SdP party radicals rather than ordinary people started to cause trouble. When, after the Annexation, soldiers of the Wehrmacht were seen to be shopping in Jewish owned shops in Reichenberg, the military commander of the town was told by an SdP district-group leader that " ... his soldiers had yet to learn a lot " (Zimmermann, 1999, p. 388). Their commander, supporting his soldiers, exploded on the spot.

The Nuremberg Laws of 1935 defined a "Jew" not according to religion, but as someone who had three or four Jewish grandparents. Many Jewish German speakers who had not practiced Judaism for years were defined as Jews; even those who had converted to Christianity. As a result many Jews were for the first time confronted with their Jewishness, whereas their identity had previously been defined by language and cultural preferences. Soon a number of laws followed which led to the expropriation of Jewish property. On 27 December 1938 these laws were introduced in Sudetenland. As most Jews had fled in haste leaving their property behind, the process of Aryanisation progressed quite speedily. On 26 September 1939 in a meeting with the "Reichstadthalter" and "Gauleiter" Henlein, the transfer of Jewish assets in Sudetenland was considered more or less concluded (Gebel, 2000, pp. 78-79).

After "Munich" anti-Semitism increased. Jews were placed outside the law by a decree of the Reich Protector on 21 June, 1939, they were not able to dispose of their property or buy land, their movement was restricted and they had to wear the yellow Star of David. They received lower food rations and could not participate in state education, while cultural and sporting activities were also restricted. Terezín (Theresienstadt), an 18th century fortress town became a ghetto for the Jews of Bohemia and Moravia; 50,000 Jews from the Protectorate were transported there, while 20,000 had been sent directly to other camps by the end of 1942. However, several thousand Bohemian and Moravian Jews managed to avoid that fate by escaping and/or fleeing abroad. Jewish losses exceeded 75,000, three quarters of the total number originally from Bohemia and Moravia (Agnew, 2004, pp. 210-215).

Already exposed to increased anti-Semitism before Munich, many were able to leave before they became trapped and the deportations started. The lucky ones were able to emigrate, as happened with most Jewish merchants connected with Gablonz industries. The rest were

deported first to the holding camp of Theresienstadt (Terezin) and after 1941 from there to the concentration camps further east (Agnew, 2004, p. 211). Since the mid 19th century, there had been a substantial but floating Jewish population in Gablonz, whose companies played an important role in the manufacturing and export of products. As many were merchants facilitating the global export of Gablonz wares, they were used to spending time abroad as well as living in Gablonz for part of the year. An unknown number also had homes in America and France. Before the war several thousand firms had existed in Gablonz served by 500-600 exporting firms, producing fashion jewellery, crystal ware, decorative glass buttons, beads, pearls and novelties in addition to a great variety of wares created by working cooperatives and families working from home in the mountainous surroundings of the town (Wiskemann, 1967, p. 171). The chandeliers in the New York Metropolitan Opera House were manufactured in Gablonz, to mention just one example.

Theirs was a double tragedy as they had often identified with German culture and spoke German, yet, even having been good Czech citizens, were often rejected on account of long-standing widespread Czech anti-Semitism. Glotz (2004, p. 164) quotes a Jewish lady's words " 'They [the Czechs] did not see fellow sufferers in us, only Germans who they hated.' "

After the annexation it was hoped that export would increase again but the indigenous Jewish merchants were no longer present as globally markets had disappeared and Jewish buyers from abroad stayed away. The plan for an economic revival helped by credits from the Reich was unsuccessful as the many Jewish and Czech businesses in Gablonz did not qualify for financial assistance and had to close down. In 1939 there were still 420 export firms with about 3000 employees in total; after five months, 60 companies had closed (Osterloh, 2006, p. 384).

Traditionally production was done mostly in small and very small firms as well as by hundreds of individual households, though there were also a number of large companies employing several hundred employees each (Osterloh 2006, p. 379). Much to the annoyance of the inhabitants of the town, an SS paper ridiculed the Gablonz jewellery industry as "Mumpitz (rubbish) Industrie", as a German woman according to German propaganda would regard wearing fashion jewellery demeaning. Also it was racially not acceptable to wear jewellery produced for "Negroes", Africans, as a huge proportion and great variety of beads had been exported to Africa since the early days of production.

People frequently showed their sympathy to Jewish co-citizens. In Gablonz Jews released from prison were handed envelopes with money, elsewhere they were provided with food. In debates on the streets the population openly made accusations against individual members of the Nazi party (Osterloh, 2006, p. 220).

It was reported in a emigrant paper abroad that in Sudetenland "... National Socialists chasing of Jews" did not get "any response" from the population ... In many places the

organisers of pogroms met “open resistance”, the population reacting “with indifference” and in places “hostile” (Osterloh, 2006, p. 219).

In general there were many examples of the German population openly and actively siding against NS racial policies concerning Jews. Actions by young party fanatics who were seen to have been led astray were regarded as completely out of order, and where adults were involved, Reich Germans were held responsible for using unacceptable Prussian methods (Osterloh, 2006, p. 220).

After Jews returned to Czechoslovakia post-war, they again faced Czech and Slovak anti-Semitism. Robert Pynsent (2007) writes that between 1945 and 1947 anti-Jewish violence occurred, some of it amounting to pogroms in thirty-one towns in the Bohemian Lands.

3.21 Czech-German cooperation

Attempting to gauge the quality of life for the Czech population during the occupation, and searching for justifiable reasons for the post-war violence against the Germans, surprising information emerged from the literature and the testimonies of the Czech and German respondents particularly in respect of Czech collaboration. These challenge quite a number of commonly held perceptions in relation to the supposed suppression of an unwilling and uncooperative Czech population. It transpired that the occupation was perceived and experienced in many different ways by the Czechs, in some cases as positive.

Tara Zahra (2008, p.110) mentions the considerable history of collaboration resulting in ambiguous dynamics within Czech society in its interaction with the occupiers throughout the war years. In Chapters 7, “Stay at home Nationalism” (p. 203), and 8, “Reich-Loyal Czech Nationalism” (p. 231), she shows how the Nazi regime’s educational approach to Czech youth training became appreciated by many Czech parents.

After the original Germanisation plans were abandoned while the war continued, an initiative for youth training was developed, designed to appeal to young Czechs. A pragmatic and subtle approach was adopted taking account of Czech nationalist culture, even promoting it. Without having to surrender their Czechness, young Czechs, rather neglected by their own intelligentsia (Kuepper, 2011, p. 230), would become the focus for the “Kuratorium fuer Jugenderziehung in Boehmen und Maehren” (Organisation for Youth Education in Bohemia and Moravia). Created in May 1942 its aim was to create an instrument to get Czech youth to accept “Reich-loyal Czech nationalism”. Members of conservative Czech elites such as Hácha had promoted such an approach since the beginning of the occupation (p. 239). From then on the Nazi occupiers adapted their methods in a policy of harnessing Czech nationalism to the Reich. At first the Kuratorium was seen as a Germanising organisation by Czech parents but when it became obvious that Czech children were encouraged in their own culture by the Germans, the lines

between collaboration and resistance became increasingly blurred. Czech boys and girls were encouraged to parade outward signs of Czech ethnicity expressed by songs, its cuisine and other aspects of the Czech way of life, all under the Nazi banner. To collaborate and resist at the same time may therefore have been the norm in occupied Czechoslovakia. Ultimately life continued with less repression than in the occupied East (Zahra, 2008, p. 240).

The Summer Relaxation programme (Erholungsaktion), started by Heydrich, provided 27 camps by 1944 which offered 20,000 Czech teenage workers in the essential war industries two weeks of abundant food, companionship including Nazi indoctrination though now combined with elements of Czech nationalism. Reluctant owners and managers of factories were obliged to release essential workers for eight weeks to become e.g. swimming instructors or camp counsellors.

By 1944 many young Czech workers actually requested to participate in the vacation programme. Camp life followed the traditions of the Hitler Youth and the Sokol; Czech participants appreciated being given the chance of a two week holiday and spoke of their liking of camp life. Days were filled with sports, singing, swimming in lakes and hiking in the woods with plenty of food available. Also mentioned in positive terms by participants were the order, camaraderie and unity among the camp population, the excellent instruction received and the uplifting effect of singing Czech national songs round camp fires at night. Each two-week session would end with a public festival with music, food, skits, speeches, sports competitions, and the singing of national Czech songs to which the population of neighbouring towns were invited. At the same time political education emphasised both Czech and German national achievements and the long history of German-Czech cooperation in their shared Heimat.

After the Day of Czech Youth in Prague in May 1944, positive parental reactions among Czechs were reported, expressing surprise at the amount of Czech culture and nationalism demonstrated, contrary to their initial belief that Czech youth was to be germanised (Zahra, pp. 242-245).

Conclusion

This chapter has analysed 150 years of the Czech-German relationship in Bohemia from the last years of the Enlightenment until the end of the Second World War. Of particular interest are the political choices the Bohemian/Sudeten Germans made in the 1930s leading to the Annexation in 1938. While the daily inter-relationship and coexistence of both populations had continued largely normally until then, historical events driven by nationalist politics caused tensions which furthered the ambitions of radicals in both the Czech and German camps.

To be able to understand the perspective of the German respondents as expressed in their testimonies, key periods in the history and politics affecting two Bohemian/Sudeten German generations preceding them were analysed. How they reacted and coped with the challenges facing them, particularly from 1918 after the creation of the new state of Czechoslovakia, is explored in detail. The following analysis will attempt to highlight the essential aspects of what respondents' memories have retained of their grandparents' and parents' perspectives, attitudes and opinions in respect of their situation. To do justice to this complex task the historiography of a multitude of different themes was addressed in this chapter, the conclusion focusing on the periods judged most important by the former and surviving Bohemian/Sudeten Germans.

The Czechs' pursuit of their national emancipation during the 19th and early 20th centuries included territorial claims to the German majority areas in the borderlands, which caused unease and opposition among the indigenous German population living there. Later the substantial influx of Czechs into German areas, increasing after 1918 in some Sudeten German municipalities, resulted in political tensions. However, participants' testimonies indicate that this was not the case in Gablonz, the hometown of the German respondents.

After 1918 respondents' grandparents and parents, like most German Bohemians, were not happy about the boundary decisions at Versailles, which were followed by the incorporation of the German regions into the state of Czechoslovakia. Another blow was the denial of national self-determination and the fact of not being consulted on constitutional issues, though they were the second largest ethnic group after the Czechs and a million more than the Slovaks. The 3.2 million former Bohemian Germans also felt cheated out of their minority rights in spite of official promises made at the Paris Peace conference in 1919. This made the Germans feel disenfranchised in the new unsympathetic Slav country. The former Austrian Bohemian Germans also resented having been officially labelled as colonists and intruders, as their presence in the old Kingdom of Bohemia went back to the early Middle-Ages. Unpopular measures and laws introduced by the new Czech Government in respect of taxation, the reduction in numbers of German schools, land re-distribution in favour of Czechs, ethnic bias in employment matters and interference in German-run industries were considered as discriminatory and detrimental German interests.

Gradually a nationally-charged political atmosphere developed during the 1930s, when equal rights issues for the Germans and territorial autonomy within Czechoslovakia became key demands by the leader of the Sudeten German Party, Konrad Henlein. At the same time Czech police stepped up their efforts to suppress German nationalism which was perceived as Fascism. Though National Socialist radicals were among the supporters of Henlein, it appears a significant number had no desire to become Nazis. It is worth repeating the fact that of 1.35 million Sudeten German members of the SdP before the annexation, only 520,000

subsequently joined the NSDAP once Sudetenland had become part of the Reich. According to respondents, their families' identities and mind-sets were much more patriotically rooted in the culture and traditions of northern Bohemia and old Austria-Hungary, rather than in Pan-Germanism. Their support for the annexation and by default for Hitler was primarily the result of wishing to solve a local problem, rather than admiration for Nazi ideology, though circumstances blurred the boundaries between both. Though clashes between anti-Fascists, Communists and Henleinists did occur, as well as incidences of vandalism against Jewish and Czech property, it is impossible to judge their regional extent and overall impact. In Gablonz Jews were helped by ordinary citizens as reported by an émigré newspaper and the Czech minority was an integrated part of the population, as demonstrated not least by the extent of intermarriage.

It appears that inter-ethnic relations as reported in the testimonies about Gablonz were more peaceful than the historiography prior to 1989 suggests. More recent research has confirmed that considerably more national non-conformity and integration between Czech and German-speakers existed than previously acknowledged. Not only in Gablonz, as shown in later chapters, but throughout Bohemia-Moravia. Even at times of political stress during the Nazi regime it became evident that the Czech population found certain aspects of the Reich's occupation of Bohemia-Moravia not only acceptable but positive. It appears that on the whole collaboration and cooperation, traditional features throughout hundreds of years of Czech and German coexistence, continued even throughout the war years up to 1945.

This research has confirmed the findings of a younger generation of historians, who have rejected the concept of nationhood as ancient and natural, and argue that it is a construct which only partly reflects the realities of inter-ethnic relationships. As will become clear, the example of Gablonz stands out in this respect. For many Bohemians, even mono-lingual Czechs or Germans, nationality had always been a question of pragmatism and choice, a result of their long productive co-existence and inter-mingling. The fluidity of their Bohemian German-Czech cultural and linguistic links has always been present in the mind-set of Sudeten Germans. However, almost in contrast, there were many examples of a noticeable identity difference between them and Reich Germans, who were perceived as outsiders with a different mind-set. Ancestral links with Czechs have frequently been acknowledged by participants. As the testimonies in respect of Gablonz in Chapter 7 and 8 will show, the local population continued to behave in a largely nationally indifferent fashion before the German expulsions. Even at that time neighbour did not turn on neighbour.

Chapter 4

The Expulsions

4.1 The Prelude to the German Expulsions

The previous chapter demonstrated that there was indeed considerable Czech-German cooperation in spite of the oppressive nature of the Nazi regime. What then were the factors leading to the expulsion of the Czechoslovak Germans after 1945? It will be shown that what is often called the “spontaneous” nature of Czech aggression against their German co-citizens inadequately reflects the circumstances surrounding this massive act of ethnic cleansing.

As the Second World War, which had engulfed the continent in all its ferocity and inhumanity, was coming to an end, President Beneš's, his government in-exile and the Resistance in Czechoslovakia were making preparations for a purely Slavic Czechoslovakia. At that time it seemed a rational solution to transfer the Germans out of Czechoslovakia to separate two supposedly contending populations, one accused of threatening Czech national existence. In the prevailing climate of cruelty, suffering, and chaos across Europe in the immediate aftermath of the war, to expel the Germans was not seen as the hardest of options, and was considered a political rather than a moral issue (Luža, 1964, pp. 320-321).

Edvard Beneš had spent the years to 1945 in exile brooding about the events in the country he had left in 1938, tirelessly working on ideas for a new de-Germanised, purely Slavic Czechoslovakia and planning their implementation. Humanitarian considerations seemed not to have influenced the political determination of the extreme nationalists to create a purely Slavic state. Their Communist colleagues opportunistically supported the nationalist struggle, which suited their own agenda. In respect of the plans for the country's Germans Frommer (2005, p. 9) speaks of an “...inherently flawed attempt to come to terms with the legacy of the Nazi occupation.”

To his admirers Beneš was a diligent and extremely skilful diplomat, to his detractors an inflexible and devious Czech nationalist. Zeman and Klimek (1997, pp. 92-93) tell us that

Austin Chamberlain ... foreign secretary ..., thought Beneš “to be untrustworthy, a character designed by Machiavelli”. ... Sir Joseph Addison, who had become the new minister to Prague ..., was forthright in his condemnation of Czechoslovak policies and politicians. ... Aggressive nationalism, Addison became convinced, was the foundation of Czechoslovak policy ...

Temporarily defeated by “Munich”, and being a man who dealt with political situations in a rational and cool-headed manner he had conceived a radical alternative solution to the inter-ethnic problem (Lukes, 1996, p. 5). Robert Bruce Lockhart, the British envoy to the provisional Czechoslovak government in-exile, wrote to his government on 7 October 1940 that “... President Beneš has found his own solution for the problem. He has borrowed it from Hitler. It is a population exchange” (quoted in Glotz, 2004, p.152).

Western agreement to the proposed transfer of the whole of the German population out of Czechoslovakia only slowly moved towards a resolution. The difficulty was to convince them that this could be done, and work out methods involving the expropriation and removal of a human mass of four million people (Germans and Hungarians) from their home regions in Bohemia-Moravia and Slovakia. Unlike the Russians, with whom Beneš had kept in contact throughout the war, the western Allies had humanitarian concerns. But Beneš successfully played the parties off against one another, telling the British and Americans that the Russians would support him and vice-versa.

In the case of Stalin, with his long experience of the forced migration of peoples, Zeman and Klimek (1997, p.190, p. 234) tells us, Beneš was “...pushing at an open door... in the matter of the expulsion of the Germans.” “The expulsion from Czechoslovakia of the Germans and the [half a million] Magyars [Hungarians]..., which concerned some 4 million people, was dealt with during the political negotiations in Moscow in five minutes.”

“The Czech government-in-exile started talking about the expulsion of the Germans after victory when the Second World War had only just started ...” (Naimark, 2001, p. 109). However, in spite of disagreements between the Czechoslovak Government in-exile and the Resistance at home, consisting of nationalists (later to lose their power) and the Communists (the ultimate victors), all were united in the belief that the Germans would have to go.

In his discussions with Allied leaders Beneš ceaselessly referred to the successful transfer between the Greek and Turkish populations after the first World War, a result of the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923. The result of this population exchange was “...poorly understood...” and certainly not a valid example, considering the human disaster it actually was (Naimark, 2001, p. 110). Nonetheless, it served as a precedent for the Alliance on how to disentangle ethnically mixed areas, and to justify the ethnic cleansing of Bohemia-Moravia post-1945. “When it came to the forced deportation of the Germans, Beneš ..., Stalin and Churchill all danced to the same tune” (Naimark, 2001, p. 113).

The Berlin (Potsdam) Conference, July 17 - August 2 1945, produced the Potsdam Agreement, signed by Beneš on 2 August, 1945, finally delivered the Allied official stamp on the removal of the Germans from their Bohemian homelands.

The Sudeten Germans had more or less largely believed what they were told in the NS media, that life was good for everyone in the Protectorate with a just and effective administration under German control, and that the majority of Czechs were happy to work for the Reich's armaments industry while enjoying higher wages as well as better employment and living conditions than ever before with higher meat, bacon, margarine, Schnaps, and cigarette rations (Franzel, 1975, pp.15-16). The Germans were told that if Czechs challenged the situation using criminal violence strict measures would be applied, which at the time sounded logical but obscured the random victimisation which occurred. Had the German Bohemians listened to the forbidden Czech broadcasts by Edvard Beneš and his colleagues from their London exile, they would have realised the danger they were in. Instead, as one respondent remembers, they had their ears assaulted by Gobbels's speeches, broadcast from loudspeakers in the street, with misleading statements about the prospects of winning the war.

Therefore mainstream Sudeten German impressions of the Protectorate were at the time different from the collective memory of the Czechs. Sudeten German judgements were formed on the basis of a different set of experiences. Unless they were themselves subject to punitive measures by the NS authorities they would not have had insight into the treatment of Communists, anti-Fascists, Czech and Jewish victims of the regime. In a war situation ordinary people are confronted with their own immediate problems, are preoccupied by personal worries and cannot easily gain an objective overview into the real state of affairs. Would they have looked for problems outside their domestic and work scenario? They most probably believed if not all, at least some of the propaganda they were fed and were not prepared at all for the way they were treated after Germany's defeat and were surprised as to "... what it was that suddenly awakened such abysmal hatred in the hearts of the Czech people ..." (Frommer, 2005, p. 26), Czechoslovakia had after all come through the war better than any other nation in Europe.

Once the underground resistance organisations, largely paralysed during the NS occupation, instigated a strategy of sabre-rattling rumours and whispering propaganda, threatening violence against all collaborators and Germans, the German population got increasingly anxious and agitated. The increasingly depressed and fearful atmosphere reflecting the tensions and anxieties of the older generation during the pre-expulsion period (Zimmermann, 1999, 364-374) are still remembered by the German participants in this study, as demonstrated in Part 2.

Soon their greatest fears became reality as particularly young members of the urban proletariat of Prague and Brno (Bruenn) started a regime of terror against the German population. Inspired by political speeches and broadcasts, and supplied with weapons, they took to the patriotic task of retribution justice with great energy and imagination.

After Germany's defeat, questions of race, Czech-German national identity and national allegiance would become issues of the greatest importance, as Czechoslovakia was now supposed to become a purely Slavic state. This purity would later be defined in various ways. As throughout the region a person's nationality had often been a question of choice, to arrive at clear definitions was quite impossible. There had always been many germanised Czechs and "czechified" Germans, with blurred boundaries in between. The notion and interpretation of what it was to be German or Czech, as well as the concept of collaboration and resistance had become fluid during the course of six years between 1939 and 1945. Thereafter these issues could easily become the reason for imprisonment, and frequently make the difference between life and death. Referring to the murderous excesses against the Germans post-1945, Frommer (2005, p. 34) perfectly conveys the situation when he writes that "...many of the dead Germans may once have been live Czechs".

4.2 Speeches and Broadcasts by President Beneš and fellow Politicians

Beneš's speeches and those by Czech nationalist and Communist politicians, first from exile, and then after returning home, are a reflection of their rage about what had happened in their country in their absence during the occupation by the Reich and its instruments of power, Reinhardt Heydrich and Karl Herman Frank.

After Heydrich's assassination Frank increased pressure to squeeze optimum productivity out of the Czech workforce to secure victory for the Reich. In a speech on 20 April 1941 Frank outlined the task ahead and stressed the importance of the contribution expected of the Czech population to the Reich's effort in the fulfilment of the gigantic work and armaments programme. Only the ruthless exploitation of the Protectorate's economic and human resources could achieve that, which meant that special measures were used to ensure success. Moral considerations did not enter the equation; everything was simply subject to what he saw as the law of total war. He had indicated to President Eliáš on 23 August 1939 shortly before the outbreak of the war that in cases of sabotage affecting the economy of the Protectorate, individual perpetrators would not be the only ones dealt with with utmost severity but the whole of the Czech population. This would mean suspects' families and friends, the owners of firms, their management, all the employees, as well as leaders of Czech industry and commerce were all equally liable to be punished (Kuepper, 2010 pp.185-186, p.192). Frank's determination and attitudes are reflected in the excerpts of speeches reproduced below.

On 29 September 1943 he addressed officials at the Ministry of State for Bohemia and Moravia stressing that "security, order and productivity" were now the priorities and added

I shall create and secure the basis and all preconditions upon which the considerable contribution of the Protectorate to the war effort relies in respect of work and production. In the coming months I shall increase both and squeeze the maximum possible from the rich source of human strength and economic power of the region.

(Kuepper, 2010, p. 362)

In spite of praise, promises and obfuscation about what lay in store for the future, the spectre of the concentration camp was, as always, present in a speech on 18 October 1942. "This is total war, nothing will resemble the conditions of peace anymore ... those shirking their duties would be given an opportunity to think about their actions in another place" (Kuepper, 2010, pp. 290-291).

In a speech on 18 October 1942 hoping to silence the propaganda broadcasts from London he made the following threats:

The Czech emigree clique in London is again busy encouraging an uprising and sabotage. To stop this loose talk we have for now arrested the relations of those who are presently inconsiderately even endangering their own ethnic group and transported them to an internment camp. We shall see whether their stupid messages will stop, otherwise we would be forced to apply appropriate measures against these people.

(Kuepper, 2010, p. 281)

Relatives of Resistance leaders in exile had already been placed in internment camps in September 1942. 2,644 persons were subsequently sent to concentration camps in October 1942. According to Luža (1964, p. 213) on 17 February 1943, close friends and relatives of Beneš followed.

A later speech in September 1944 threatened "... if officials of the Czech (Protectorate) Government are found guilty of engaging in forbidden activities he would not hesitate to have that person drastically punished on the spot and leave the body hanging for for 48 hours to remain visible to everybody." (Kuepper, 2010, p. 324)

As a result attitudes of Czech politicians in exile had hardened to the point of not showing any sympathy for the civilian victims in view of what was being proposed, to expel the whole of the German population from Czechoslovakia. To start off with, there was talk of "good Germans", a term which was dropped after the reprisals following Heydrich's assassination. Increasingly the message from exile became one of pure hatred.

Emphasising Nazi terror and the Lidice and Ležaky massacres as examples, the President-in-exile, Edvard Beneš, and his government created an additional concept: German guilt and responsibility for all the disasters that had befallen the world during the Second World War. This was soon to be used by Beneš to legitimise the German Expulsions after 1945. Meanwhile the

Czechs were encouraged via radio broadcasts to exact revenge and retribution against their German neighbours, who were all now supposedly collectively guilty, on a par with Nazi war criminals.

The contents of excerpts of speeches and articles reproduced below do not just illustrate the degree of hate against the German population they expressed. They demonstrate a deliberate political strategy to justify and aid the expulsion of the Germans. "German" became synonymous with "Nazi". Staněk (2002) shows the politically manipulated nature of Czech retribution and justice against the Germans at the end of the last World War. By their vitriolic rhetoric, Beneš and his colleagues hoped to frighten as many Germans as possible to leave on their own initiative before executing the enormous task of the official removal of more than 3 million unwanted citizens. The country needed to be free of its Germans to help bring about the revolution for the new Slavic Czechoslovakia.

As examples in zones of conflict round the world have shown to this day, official encouragement to violence always produces many innocent victims, something which also occurred in post-war Sudetenland and Bohemia Moravia. Though unregulated militias were by far the most active in meting out their version of retributive justice, ordinary members of the general public also became perpetrators of unspeakable crimes; there was after all no reason to fear the law.

The sections below are reproduced as per the original and reflect the atmosphere in the political and public sphere immediately after the defeat of Germany.

Excerpts of Speeches by President Benes and political Colleagues

(Neustupny & Groeger, 2007/2008, pp.1-5).

During the war

Dr. Edvard Beneš broadcasting from London on 27 October 1943:

... here the end of the war is going to be written in blood ... and the Germans will get merciless and manifold payback for everything which they have perpetrated in our lands since 1938. The whole Nation will be involved in this battle, there won't be a Czechoslovak who will not be active and no patriot who won't exact just retribution for everything the nation had to suffer.

(His knowledge was received second and third-hand, as he was a thousand miles away.)

Dr. Edvard Beneš to his Government-in-exile on 3 February 1944

In short, our resistance and the complete change in this war will, and must be, revolutionary and organised militarily and be violent, and will, and must for us, bring about a big peoples' retribution and for the Germans and Fascist perpetrators a really bloody and merciless end.

Report by Dr. Prokop Drtina, Political Secretary of Dr. Edvard Beneš to the resistance groups at home. London, on 16 July 1944.

... what to do with our Germans, all the public world opinion is developing favourably, just how our nation needs it. We are therefore counting on the possibility of a transfer of our German population. ... It is necessary that we manage much of it ourselves, immediately in the first days of liberation, so that as many as possible of all guilty Nazis flee from fear of the citizen revolt against them, and that as many as possible of the ones who defend themselves as Nazis and resist would be beaten to death by the revolution. Always think of that, the whole nation must be prepared for it.

After the end of the war

After his return from exile, speaking at Kaschau (Košice) on 17 April 1945 on behalf of the Czechoslovak Government, Beneš, called on the people of the Czech lands to progress to decisive battle actions against the German population:

To all Czechs

... Fill the whole country with the spirit of the offensive, the courage to fight and the certainty of victory. Allow the hatred against the German hangmen which has collected in your hearts to break forth. Remember the terrible pain during the six years of the German occupation, that now the moment of revenge for the bloody executions by Heydrich, Daluge and Frank has come...

Go and hold the Germans to account for all their atrocities and do not have mercy with the German murderers. Also settle your accounts mercilessly with the traitors of the Nation and Republic.

A pretty wide spectrum for revenge is opened up here which, as post-war testimony dossiers demonstrate, was indeed acted on irrespective of the fact that the majority of "the Germans" were members of the civilian population. They would not have been the ones empowered to do any of the things they were accused of; it was men in uniform who were the perpetrators, not civilians. They were defenceless women, children and old people as by then the Sudeten soldier men-folk were altogether absent, having fought elsewhere throughout the war, and were either dead, on their way to Siberia or held in Western prisoner of war camps.

And finally

Dr. Edvard Beneš in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall in Brunn (Brno) on 12 May, 1945:

...This [German] nation has ceased to be altogether human in this war, humanly tolerable, and appears to us only as a single large monster. For all this that nation must meet a big and harsh punishment, ... We have said to ourselves, we have to definitively liquidate the German problem. ...

We will set to work immediately. And we shall put things in order amongst us, particularly here too in the town of Brunn [Brno] with the Germans and all the others [meaning half a million ethnic Hungarians in the region]. My programme is - and I don't make any secret about it, that we have to liquidate the German question in the Republic. In this work we shall need the strength of all of you.

Beneš also instructed his then chief of propaganda, Ripka, to portray the Sudeten Germans in such a way "... that they are the actual cause of the war and always will be" (Brandes, 2001, p. 193).

Though the effect of these messages inspired large numbers of mainly young people, part of militias such as the Red Guards and so-called partisans, armed to the teeth to go on the rampage, on the whole it did not involve the majority of the Czech civilian population. As explained later, the persecutions were the work of an active and deliberately-organised minority who were at times joined by others to indulge in unacceptably cruel behaviour.

Most Germans were unaware of the broadcasts but horrified when they finally realised what lay in store for them. As one respondent wrote, his family were stunned and could not believe that all of them were to be deprived of their rights and officially declared outlaws. Of the German respondents most children sensed the shock, tension and hopelessness which spread in their families, a feeling they have not forgotten.

According to Pynsent (2007, p. 214)

The wise British publisher, Victor Gollancz, abhorred post-war extreme nationalism, Czech especially, ... He considers (extreme) nationalism 'a mode of personal gratification' and defines 'any undue consciousness of nationality', a 'vice because it concentrates on comparative inessentials' like 'language' or 'blood'. 'It is, partly an invention of ambitious and unscrupulous politicians, and partly a drug from which the populace derives . . . a kind of bogus and vicarious satisfaction.'

This seems an apt quote on which to finish this section.

Decrees related to the expulsion of Germans and Hungarians

Out of 143 decrees of the post-1945 Czech government still valid today, three were relevant to the legal position of people marked out to lose their citizenship:

1. All who had declared themselves as Germans or Hungarians in the Census of 1930 (including Jews).
2. Those automatically administratively transferred to Reich German citizenship after the Annexation of the Sudetenland and during the Occupation.
3. Everybody who had voluntarily opted for German citizenship.

In a report to the European Commission (2002) by Lord Kingsland, QC, nine decrees summarised below affected the German and Hungarian minorities:

1. 5/1945 of 19 May 1945, concerning the invalidity of some transactions involving property rights from the time of lack of freedom and concerning the National Administration of property assets of Germans, Hungarians, traitors and collaborators and of certain organizations and associations. It authorised the complete expropriation of the groups referred to above.
2. 12/1945 on 21 June 1945 concerning the confiscation and expedited allotment of agricultural property of Germans, Magyars, as well as traitors and enemies of the Czech and Slovak nation.
3. 16/1945 on 19 June 1945, known as The Great Retributions Decree, concerning the punishment of Nazi criminals, traitors and their accomplices and concerning extraordinary people's courts. [These administered justice in the same way as the Nazi Volksgerichte.]
4. 28/1945 of 20 July 1945 concerning the settlement of Czech, Slovak or other Slavic farmers on the expropriated agricultural land of Germans, Hungarians and other enemies of the state.
5. 33/1945 on 2 August 1945 concerning modification of Czechoslovak citizenship [meaning loss of nationality] of persons of German and Hungarian ethnicity.
6. 71/1945 - Forced labour for persons who had lost Czechoslovakian citizenship as a result of Decree 33/1945.
7. 108/1945 on 25 October 1945 concerning confiscation of enemy property and concerning Funds of national recovery.

8. 138/1945 on 27 October 1945 -The Small Retributions Decree -. Punishment of certain offences against the national honour. Provision for the imprisonment of Germans. Forced labour- special categories and prohibition of the right to appeal.
9. Act No.115/1946 on 8 May 1946 – ‘Amnesty Act’ – Exclusion of criminal responsibility for acts committed as reprisals against the occupation forces.

(Lord Kingsland QC, 2002)

The last infamous decree retrospectively absolved perpetrators of criminal acts against Germans and Hungarians of any culpability if the crimes were committed in the interests of the nation.

4.3 A questionable Justice System - the Beginning of the End for the Germans

The decrees were responsible for totally predictable injustices and gross abuses for which the Amnesty Act (Nr.115/1946) subsequently granted retrospective freedom from prosecution to all perpetrators if they had acted in the national interest (Frommer 2005, p. 94, p.187).

With the collapse of Germany becoming obvious in the Spring of 1945, the Czechs, after years of occupation, were now looking at liberation and regaining power over their lives and country. Soon some Czechs, newly empowered by directives from above and full of pent up rage and revolutionary fervour, started to take the law into their hands. As all Germans had been stripped of their civic rights, and were no longer legally protected, to survive as a German became a matter of luck. Punishment, retribution and revenge were in the majority of cases randomly meted out by self-appointed, legally unqualified people for crimes against the national honour, disloyalty against the state and collaboration. Whole sections of the German civilian population were targeted with physical and psychological abuse, in many cases with dire outcomes which would cost many lives. National Committees, Revolutionary Guards, Czechoslovak army and Red Army detachments, as well as self proclaimed security forces calling themselves Czech partisans, adventurists and even German Communists became the sources of authority in the borderlands (Glasheim 2001, p. 201).

These self-empowered groups and individuals, revelling in their new-found importance, committed crimes for which they were never held to account. Frommer (2005, p. 51) speaks of an " ... epidemic of vigilante killings, ..." Another danger for the Bohemian Germans came from the newly established local National Committees (národní výbor) which took control in their areas. A motley collection of often self-appointed people became all-powerful in deciding who had offended against the national honour. Mass arrests in spring 1945 packed the country's jails. Police, vigilantes, paramilitary groups and national committees had detained suspects en masse without determining their guilt or even recorded the charges against them. Prosecutors

eventually released thousands who were found to have been arrested under false pretences. In the meantime many people had been put to death in all sorts of indescribable ways.

When people's courts were created by President Beneš and his government, later used by the Communists, an example of jurisdiction which had previously dealt mercilessly with alleged enemies of the Reich, these courts could within minutes pass severe judgements including death sentences (Frommer, 2005, pp. 95-187; Franzel, 1975, p. 24).

As referred to the Revolutionary Guards, groups of young people expected to keep order, created mayhem and terror in German areas. They and older Czech patriots would often wear German officers' uniforms, preferably those of the SS, showing high rank.

A completely hopeless situation with no way out was now the reality facing the 3.5 million Germans of Czechoslovakia. Following the Allied landings in June 1944, heralding the eventual demise of the Reich, they stared disaster in the face. With the Wehrmacht withdrawing towards the West and Red Army soldiers advancing through Silesia and Moravia into Bohemia, their impact on many towns and villages was devastating. They also accounted for " ... a great deal of damage and were especially brutal in their dealings with German women and girls" (Naimark, 2002, p.116). As happened in the German Eastern Provinces many were abused, raped, gang-raped and raped to death by the Russian "liberators", with Czechs frequently aiding and abetting this conduct (Pynsent, 2007).

In the villages around Gablonz, where the Russian soldiers were billeted, full scale chases of women and girls would take place. Though hiding places were quickly organised, time and again some women had to spend days hidden in the woods. The unfortunates who were caught were quietly and unbureaucratically (Stuetz & Zenkner, 1992, p. 38) helped by local doctors in an effort to avoid pregnancies and STDs, which were wide-spread among members of the Red Army.

The Russians were a problem when drunk which happened frequently, although in the testimonies in Part 2 (Section: History as experienced by respondents) they are also described as being kind, particularly to the children. In the literature there are many reports that they stopped Czechs' transgressions against Germans. One example described by Emil Breuer from Reichenberg near Gablonz (Schieder, 1951, document 279) demonstrates how early one morning towards the end of May 1945 a Russian, a certain Major Lykov, stopped Red Guards from shooting people who, on their way to work, had been herded off the streets as well as a tram, and were lined up against a wall in the main square (Tuchplatz).

4.4 The “Wild Expulsions” and the “Orderly and Humane Transfers”

What Frommer (2005, p. 202)) calls “... the often - uncertain structure of authority...” was to blame for allowing chaotic circumstances to develop where humanitarian values could be and were openly disregarded.

After Beneš's return to his country, the Czech strategy was to frighten the Germans out of their homes, and force them to leave the region by any means possible, to demonstrate to the Allies that the expulsions were going ahead whatever their decisions. In reports to the wider world examples of violent disorder were officially explained as a sign of spontaneous revolutionary outbursts of hate by the whole Czech nation.

The time of the Wild Expulsions, from May till summer 1945 (Brandes, 2005, p.411), was followed by what is known as the Orderly and Humane Transfers after the Conference of Potsdam (16 July to 2 August, 1945). As stipulated by the western Allies the transfers were to be “orderly and humane”, not something which could easily be implemented in an atmosphere of chaos, hate and vengefulness. As their men folk were absent, mainly old people, mothers with children and babies were now detained in camps, frequently in subhuman conditions, until they were officially cleared for departure. Glasheim (2001, p. 201) writes “... little has been written on the nature of the chaos of the summer of 1945.” Mathew Frank's research has partially filled that gap, having explored the ensuing human catastrophe and appalling situation in the camps in some detail.

Details of what took place in respect of events in Czechoslovakia are contained in eyewitness accounts contained in a 2 volume dossier, first published in the 1950s by the German Federal Ministry for Expellees, Refugees and the War Damaged (Schieder, 1952). Written and transcribed oral testimonies, once corroborated by contemporary witnesses, were collected and published with explanatory notes, but otherwise unedited. Incidents were only referred to once. This was done under the supervision of a Commission of German Historians and Lawyers considered untainted by Nazism by the then West-German Government. Their brief was to remain completely non-judgemental and leave the evaluation of the contents to later generations. Approximately 1000 small print pages of these sometimes extremely disturbing witness reports provide a comprehensive if harrowing source of information on Czechoslovakia.

The first violent excesses had begun with the Prague Uprising at the beginning of May 1945 After years of “anxious tranquillity”, armed resistance finally spread into the Protectorate (Frommer, 2005, p. 28), and the borderlands, followed by quite unexpected often brutal reprisals on the Sudeten Germans.

In Prague the first battle was with the German troops, but their grasp on the city loosened, giving Czech mobs their chance to take revenge. As the battle intensified, Colonel Harold Perkins, war-time head of the Polish and Czech sections of the Special Operations Executive (SOE), witnessed the actions of Russians and Czechs venting their fury, and mobs meting out lynch justice including to women (Frank 2008, p. 98).

In a letter Perkins wrote two weeks later about how he could not get ...“ ‘worked up against ordinary human beings to the extent of sub human treatment- especially towards women. Butchering them was no way to rebuild this world having fought against such tactics’ ” (Frank 2007, p. 99).

British observers like Perkins, while sympathising with the aim of a Czechoslovak state without Germans, found the manner in which the Czechs were going about achieving it counter-productive and at times “abhorrent” (Frank 2007, p. 99). The Americans occupying the western part of Czechoslovakia eventually brought a restraining influence to bear.

The “Sudetengau”, part of the Reich from 1938-1945, had before then been mainly calm as well as quite separate from the Protectorate where most of the human rights abuse by the Reich’s security services had taken place.

With censorship of correspondence and newspapers, to listen to foreign broadcasts was a capital offence, members of the general public in Sudetenland would have been largely kept in the dark about the situation in the Protectorate. They were going about their daily lives, glad the war was over, quite ignorant of what was to come, as they had not perceived their coexistence with the Czech minority in their midst as hostile. This was also the case in Gablonz, a fact corroborated by the German testimonials (Section: History as experienced by respondents, Part 2). The German population had all along been kept misinformed about the true state of the war by their official media sources. Once it became clear that the war was lost, people began to hope for a better future, instead they were shocked by what was to be their fate.

After the humiliations of six oppressive years of Nazi occupation, the Czechs revenge on Czechoslovakia’s Germans occurred in two waves, the “wild expulsions” taking place in the four months after liberation in early May 1945. This had been happening unofficially, not in the western regions under American control but it affected areas sharing a border with the by then Soviet controlled part of Germany. It was Saxony and Thuringia to which the Northern Bohemian expellees were forcibly directed. Germans from Moravia, the town of Bruenn/Brno, and the population of the German enclaves Iglau/Jihlava and Olmuetz/ Olomouc were forced towards the Austrian border. Czech paramilitaries, army units, and local vigilantes drove hundreds of thousands of Germans from their homes, brutalising and killing many in the process. Most patriotic Czechs, irrespective of their differences in political outlook, now shared one sentiment, which was an intense hatred of anything, or anybody, German which, "...

readied Czechs to beat, kill and humiliate their neighbours" (Bryant, 2007, pp. 220-221). Fortunately in the case of Gablonz all testimonials show (History, Part 2) that the local Czechs did not turn on their German neighbours and helped to outwit troublesome Russians and Czech gangs from outside (Section: History as experienced by respondents, Part 2).

After that the Allied powers approved the "organized transfer" at the Potsdam conference in August 1945 (Glassheim, 2002, para. 2) when a luggage allowance between 30 and 50 kilos was introduced.

However, the post-war retribution scenario varied, as research by Tomáš Staněk and Adrian von Arburg shows, because local governments differed from the Prague government in their approach to the expulsions. Their findings show that the Czechoslovak military played a much more decisive role than the general public in the expulsions (Staněk & von Arburg, 2006, pp. 465-533).

Immediately after the Prague uprising, members of the nationalist and Communist underground organisations systematically spread out from Prague to all parts of the country to implement president Beneš's revolutionary programme for the new de-germanised Czechoslovakia. Retributive justice was now being implemented with frightening consequences. What has often been described as a spontaneous outbreak of Czech fury was largely the result of secret preparatory work by the the Czech government in-exile, the nationalist Resistance, and the Communists. This became obvious as the same weapons suddenly appeared countrywide, including steel-rod whips and truncheons, which were openly carried around and used by gangs of youths on those who could not defend themselves, even children.

In Prague, and other parts of the country, examples of punishment, including torture and public executions, were made of German citizens of the town, university professors, teachers, headmasters, well known personalities, renowned medical specialists, lawyers and other professionals, in fact anybody who might have held an important post in their respective communities (MacDonogh, 2007, pp. 125-162). Ordinary country folk too, particularly men, could expect to be singled out for special treatment. The depth of contempt and total lack of human empathy the Germans were subjected to is expressed by Naimark (2002, p. 118) on the basis of an eyewitness statement, "The Czechs look at them like cattle." The speeches of President Beneš and his Communist associates and the so called Beneš Decrees laid the foundations for all manner of violent events for which the postwar Amnesty Act (Nr.115/1946), granted retrospective freedom from prosecution to all perpetrators if they had acted in the national interest.

The period of the Wild Retributions and Expulsions, the Revolutionary phase, had started with the retreat of the German forces towards the West followed by advance of the Red Army from the East. Beneš's orders were that " 'From Czechoslovakia should be obligatorily expelled all

German teachers, professors, SS types, Gestapo-men, members of the Hitler youth, all active members of the Henlein movement and the entire German bourgeoisie, all rich Germans ...' " (Naimark , 2001, p. 113). Most of them were civilians as all SS types, Gestapo-men etc., would have been eliminated, incarcerated early on or had been sent to Siberian gulags by the Russians.

Ill-treatment of Germans and Czechs regarded as collaborators and traitors was often followed by incarceration in detention-centres (Naimark, 2002, p. 119) where forced labour on hunger rations became the order of the day for men and women alike. For men it meant work in mines, quarries, agriculture, and factories, with women also having to do heavy work, often performing deliberately humiliating tasks. One Gablonz respondent's father laboured for ten years in the Jachimov uranium mine; several mothers also had to do forced labour, some with their children present.

Prisons were guarded by an "...eclectic group of often self-selected individuals. Uniformed police, Revolutionary Guards, former partisans, factory militia, and even Red Army soldiers patrolled detention centres" (Frommer 2005, p. 55). Some guards would indulge in retribution entertainment making regular "Pruegelorgien" (beating orgies), and every conceivable and inconceivable type of abuse a common practice, which more often than not had fatal consequences (Zenkner & Stuetz, 1992, pp. 28-55 and many others). Detainees would be deliberately starved, and the chance of survival for the old, children and babies was slim. Medical care for Germans was difficult to find. In many areas sick Germans needing hospital treatment, including pregnant women and those giving birth would be given no or only minimal attention and were not allowed to stay in hospital. However, there were many local Czechs who helped if they could, risking the same fate as the Germans. The historian Tomáš Staněk was one of a group of Czechoslovak authors whose research from Czech sources has shed considerable light on aspects of this period, particularly the camp system.

From late Spring 1945 onwards German families were forced from their homes, sometimes with only a few minutes notice. There is quite a bit of information on this part of participants' experiences in their testimonies as they retained clear recollections of those upsetting times (Section: History as experienced by respondents, Part 2). During the wild expulsions only hand luggage or rucksacks were allowed. Apart from a few items for daily use, everything else and certainly all valuables had to be left. During that time there are many records of forced marches towards Germany, into Poland, and to Austria; people were just pushed over the border and left to fend for themselves.

The infamous Bruenn/Brno Death March is one of the best known examples. The entire German population, 30,000 people (possibly as high as 50,000) was evicted from their homes in that town on May 30, 1945, and mercilessly beaten as they struggled on foot to camps on the border with Austria (Naimark (2002, p. 119). The number of victims mentioned by Naimark as

1,700, is estimated by others to be considerably higher. Although the figures remain uncertain and “contested” (Sayer 2000, p. 243), the old, young and the sick did not stand a chance, babies died because mothers had no milk, the dead and dying were shot or kicked into ditches having to be interred by German working parties later.

During the chaotic period of the wild expulsions until summer 1945, approximately 660,000 people were summarily expelled (Frommer, 2005, p. 34). It was during those unregulated early months of 1945 that a lot of the worst atrocities occurred and the majority of victims overall met their end, or became an element of statistics as missing persons. In the name of patriotism and national purity Beneš and his colleagues had empowered mobs to do unspeakable things to decent ordinary folk in front of howling crowds (time-witness reports: Schieder, 1994).

The version of these events having been spontaneous and independent of the role of Czech politicians is contradicted by Frommer (2005, p. 40) as follows, “Wild expulsion was not simply an organic explosion of antipathy, it was consciously desired, planned, and executed by Czech leaders”.

There were those who were not told to leave the country immediately. Factory owners, people with property, land-holdings, businesses, and shops would have their property confiscated and a “národní správce”, a Czech administrator, would be put in charge. The original owners were then often forced to perform hard physical labour or do menial jobs in what used to be their own business or farm, more often than not built up by previous generations. Having proved himself as a reliable representative of the new order, the administrator could later take over the premises for good. The original owners might at first find alternative accommodation but would soon be taken to a variety of holding centres, camps, schools, cellars, cinemas etc. before finally being removed.

During the wild expulsions, open coal and cattle wagons were used to transport the transferees. The open ones were completely unsuitable for the purpose of conveying human cargo, offering no protection from the elements, and nothing to prevent the showers of glowing sparks spraying people during the journey (Section: History as experienced by respondents, Part 2). In an effort to get rid of as many Germans in as short a time as possible many victims were tightly packed in, no consideration given to sanitation, food or drink. Often the locked trains were left in sidings for long periods. Predictably on arrival in one of the occupied zones, live transferees were not the only ones spilling out of the trains, when the doors were thrown open.

During the humane transfers after the Agreement of Potsdam only scheduled goods or cattle trains were now permitted to transport transferees and in theory there had to be basic provision for the people to be conveyed out of the country. This meant that people had to wait much longer in disease- and vermin- ridden camps until their turn came to leave. Starving and surrounded by the dying, inmates could not wait to leave for a less harrowing environment.

Frank (2008, pp.184-185) writes that British visitors pointed to the poor conditions in the camps. Referring to Harold Nicolson's diary about Czech excesses which " 'made the blood run cold' ", and cites a journalist who reported that " ' ... children - dreadful, wizened dark-skinned, monkey-like creatures - were in an advanced state of emaciation.' "

When they were eventually cleared for transport out of Czechoslovakia, it would, according to regulations, be in trains of forty wagons with thirty passengers per wagon. People were officially allowed to take essentials of between 30-50 kg and 1000 Reichsmark. Before boarding they would be inspected, frequently being relieved of their last possession, anything the Czech militia guards took a liking to, which left the transferees with barely more than clothing when they got to the border (Glassheim 2001, p. 208). The final train-load of expellees left from Meirhoefen (Dvory) near Karlsbad on 29 October 1946 (Glotz 2004, p. 252). Organized Transfers had begun in January 1946 with 2.26 million more Germans being deported to Allied occupation zones. The final death-toll and those later reported missing from wild and organised expulsion and retribution was massive.

The delegates of the current German-Czech Commission of Historians have had a hard time trying to agree on the number of casualties. Between 19,000 and 30,000 German victims are acknowledged by Czech researchers but thousands more are thought to have died from disease, exhaustion and other unnatural causes (Frommer 2005, p. 34). The German experts have pointed out that numbers quoted only relate to deaths actually witnessed and registered in Czech lands, which because of the prevailing chaotic circumstances are too low according to German sources. During the chaos of the wild expulsions many unrecorded fatalities occurred beyond the borders of Czechoslovakia. For instance in the case of the Germans from Northern Bohemia, they were forced over the borders into Soviet occupied Saxony and left to their own devices somewhere in the countryside in the middle of nowhere. This meant having to walk on, often considerable distances to find shelter and sustenance. According to eyewitness reports (Schieder, 1994, II) many elderly and infirm people just collapsed, dying in fields and woods along the way from exhaustion whereas babies and toddlers died through lack of water and food. An unknown number of expellees, often whole families, chose death in the river Elbe. Groups of survivors trekking towards villages and towns along its banks testified that for months they were covered in adults' and children's clothes which had been washed up. The "Heimatortskartei" (HOK) in Regensburg, the official Caritas Church Family-Reunion Search Service has a card index of names and addresses of 225,133 Sudeten Germans whose fate has never been clarified (www.sudeten.de).

Eagle Glassheim's encapsulates the realities behind the German expulsions in his poignant 2002 review of Staněk's book *Crimes of Retribution: Czech Violence against Germans in 1945* (Princeton University). Staněk shows the politically manipulated nature of Czech retribution and justice against the Germans at the end of the last world war in unsparing detail. He is

particularly critical of this extra-judicial retribution--punishment without trial, based on collective guilt, which he blames for the post-war weakening of moral and legal norms in the later Communist Czechoslovakia. He describes the effect of the chaotic influx of Czech forces into the German-inhabited borderlands in May 1945, the so-called Revolutionary Guards, the most vicious, as well as paramilitaries with a propensity for murder, rape, and plunder. Army units and security detachments would sometimes rein in the Red Guards, sometimes join them in roundups and "cleansing" actions (Glasheim, 2002).

Many Germans could not face the reality that stared them in the face in 1945 and committed suicide; often whole families perished because of "The horrible treatment at the hands of the Czechs led to despair and hopelessness" (Naimark 2002, p. 118).

Frank's study (2008, pp. 102– 115) has shed light on the increasing humanitarian concerns of senior journalists and British diplomats in Czechoslovakia at the time such as the former SOE agent Harold Perkins. Their and journalists' reports led to anguished public debates in Britain as moral doubts surrounding the forced removal of German civilians from Eastern Europe began to surface. A number of personalities in public life, such as George Orwell, Bishop Bell and others became deeply troubled by the situation, particularly the respected publisher, Victor Gollancz who is quoted here: "If the conscience of men ever again becomes sensitive, these expulsions will be remembered to the undying shame of all who committed or connived at them" Victor Gollancz (1946, p. 96).

Some well known German sources on the expulsions from Czechoslovakia are the works of Franzel (1975); Schieder (1953-1960); and Turnwald (1951).

4.5 Resettlement with unexpected results

President Beneš's plans for the resettlement of the borderlands by Czechs from the central areas and other ethnic Slavs did not quite go according to what he had envisaged.

Once the Germans had been dispossessed the prevailing circumstances initially suggested a free for all to many potential new settlers, some of whom assumed this would give them everything they ever dreamt of without having to work for it. There followed a rush of people from outside the area into Sudetenland, which was considered rich in comparison with the rest of Czechoslovakia. During the time of the expulsions and property confiscation, new settlement in the borderlands created a situation where competing objectives collided with human greed (Gerlach, 2007, p. iv.). The Czech authorities' aim to enable their communities overall to benefit from the redistribution of German property was frustrated by widespread looting accompanying the arrival of new settlers. Also members of the Czech army and militias plundered while in

charge of expelling the Germans. Their behaviour brought about additional chaos on top of the expulsions and created an impression of the borderlands as corrupt and lawless. Those who came purely to profit from the expropriation of Sudeten Germans, were commonly referred to as "gold diggers". Revolutionary Guard units and other paramilitary groups, as well as civilians often committed robberies in towns and villages, a source of constant complaints from locally indigenous Czechs (Gerlach, 2007, pp. 108-111).

Von Arburg (2003, pp. 203-217) and Wiedemann (2007, pp. 289-319), who analysed the symbiosis and conflicts between old and new borderland inhabitants, also draw attention to the facts as outlined above in Gerlach's study. Long-term Czech frontier residents would frequently complain about the lack of discipline and the free-for-all attitude among the new settlers with whom they had little in common.

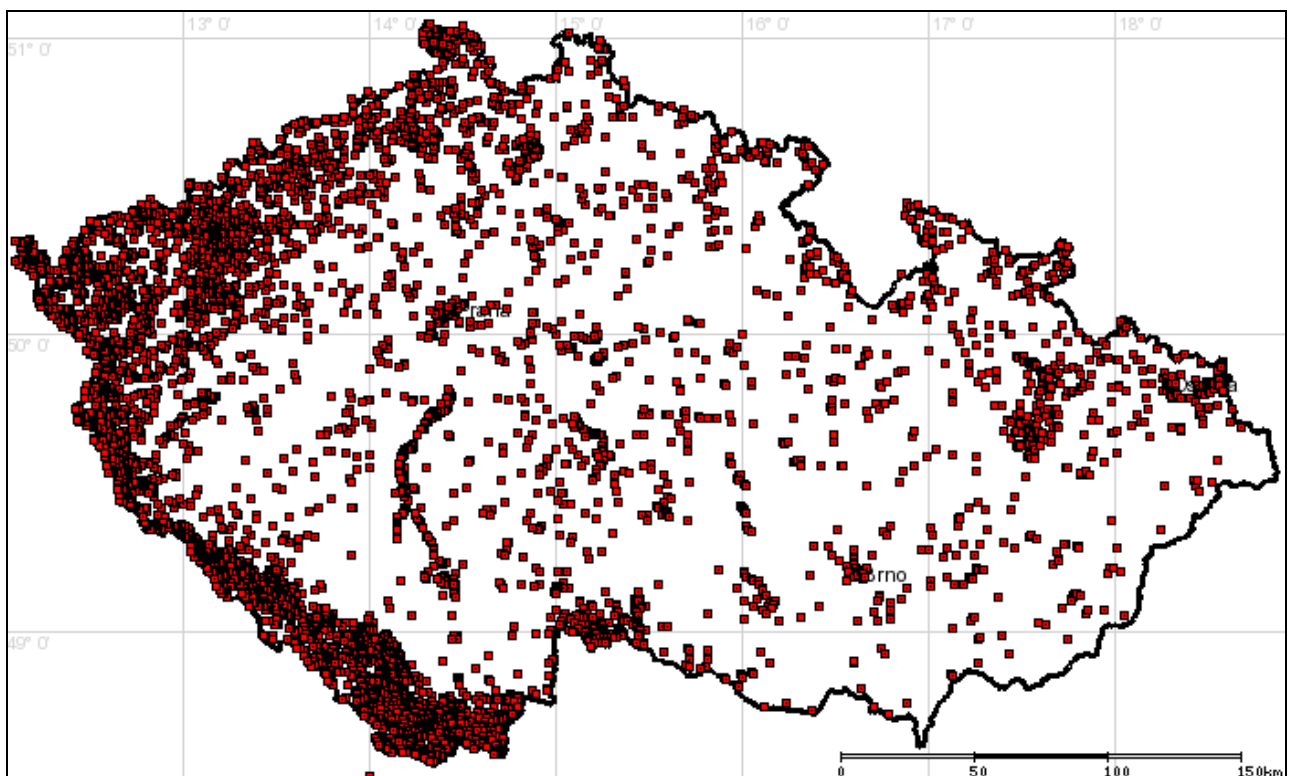
Luža (1964, pp. 268-270) too acknowledges the fact that a number of doubtful elements arrived from the Czech interior who, under various pretexts, plundered and looted German homes and ill-treated their owners. Franzel (1975, p. 22) quotes Czech black humour which labelled the nightly express train from Prague to the North Bohemian borderlands as the "Alaska Express", full of Zlatokopci (gold diggers) who would return the next day with rucksacks and suitcases full of valuables. Once the Czech authorities managed to get the situation under control it nationalised all German property, and by April 1946 in excess of 3000 culprits were sent to prison.

As the Czech authorities began to assert their power they also realised that the newcomers could not keep the economy of the borderlands going, the know-how and skills base needed had been lost. They then had to stop a considerable number of Germans leaving as they were needed to maintain essential services. A great deal of damage had been done by then and valuable assets had been destroyed, dispersed or lost through ignorance of their importance (von Arburg, Borodziej, & Kostjaschow 2008; Zenkner & Stuetz 1992; Roessler 1979).

Having always been an ethnically diverse, culturally and industrially productive part of Central Europe, the formerly German borderland regions turned into a backwater under the post-war Communist regime. The character of the area had been irrevocably changed, with much of the land remaining uncultivated, once inhabited areas reverting to nature, buildings crumbling and/or being levelled. The former industries, chemicals, textiles, as well as considerable glass and china production were replaced by heavy industries. The resulting emission of toxic fumes caused a major ecological disaster, killing large acreages of the region's ancient woodlands (Glassheim, 2004, Meeting Report 290, Wilson Centre). Since Communism ended, positive ecological measures have gradually helped to redress the damage. The Czech Republic is an attractive country where mountainous border regions surround open rolling country in the interior like fortress walls with deep river valleys cutting through wooded mountain ranges. Two important rivers, the Neisse and Elbe, rise in the mountains, near the town of Gablonz whose

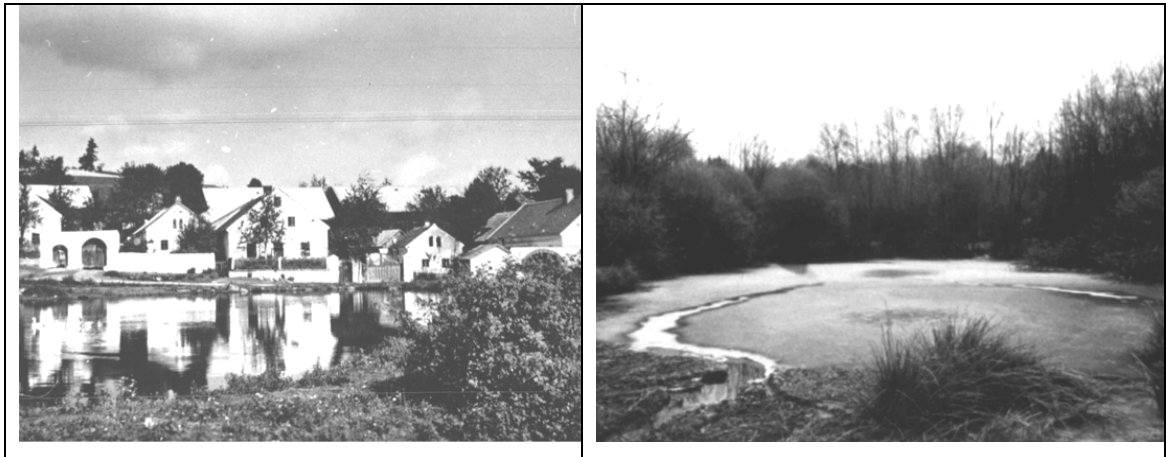
former German inhabitants never forgot their old homeland. Respondents, though children when they left, still have vivid memories of the mountains surrounding Gablonz where they loved to play in the dense woods.

From 2005 a Czech citizens' initiative (<http://www.zanikleobce.cz/>) has made it their task to investigate and map pre-1945 German settlements, now no longer officially registered in Czech records. As remnants are found, what is left is recorded and the location mapped. They are continuously updating their records with new places being added, accompanied by pictures showing the present state of affairs vis-a-vis pre-1945 photos. This important research has created a lot of cross-border cooperation and interest in Germany and Austria whereas the reaction in the Czech Republic remains ambivalent.



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Figure 4 The Czech Republic: Location of German Settlements no longer in post-1945 official Records. As they are discovered the list of names is updated and locations mapped. (<http://www.zanikleobce.cz/index.php?menu=22&title=>)



Wosant 1923

Wosant/Bažantov 1996

Figure 5 Before and after Expulsion: A former German Bohemian village, one of thousands no longer in existence. (Isergebirgs-Museum, 2011, further examples can be seen on: <http://www.antikomplex.cz/o-sudetech.html>. and <http://www.zanikleobce.cz/>)

Towards the end of the war and shortly afterwards, Winston Churchill dealt with the enforced movement of whole populations from Eastern Europe in two poignant speeches, quoted below. He refers to the displacement of the inhabitants of German settlement areas in Eastern Europe after 1945. Up to 16 million Germans overall had to leave their home regions of whom an estimated 3 million were war children. Their experiences were broadly similar though they differed in a number of ways in respect of Gablonz, as will be shown in Part 2 of the study.

Churchill's Speech on "Poland" *to the House of Commons on 15 December 1944* reflects the attitude of Allied leaders at the end of the war. It demonstrates that the transfer or expulsion of millions, sanctioned at the Conference of Potsdam (1945) was considered an appropriate method to disentangle mixed populations to secure future peace.

POLAND (excerpt)

The transference of several millions of people would have to be effected from the East to the West or North, as well as the expulsion of the Germans—because that is what is proposed: the total expulsion of the Germans—from the area to be acquired by Poland in the West and the North. For expulsion is the method which, so far as we have been able to see, will be the most satisfactory and lasting. There will be no mixture of populations to cause endless trouble, as has been the case in Alsace-Lorraine. A clean sweep will be made. I am not alarmed by the prospect of the disentanglement of populations, nor even by these large transferences, which are more possible in modern conditions than they ever were before.

Churchill, W. S. (1944, December 15). Poland. *Hansard. HC Deb.* (5/406). 1478-578.
Retrieved from <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/sittings/1944/dec/15>

Churchill's "Iron Curtain" Speech to Parliament, given on 16 August 1945 as leader of the Opposition, again addressed the issue of the expulsions, also talking about the results of Potsdam in respect of the new boundaries of Poland, with a reference to the situation in Czechoslovakia.

DEBATE

Final Review of the War, "Why Should We Fear for our Future?"

I am particularly concerned at this moment, with the reports reaching us of the conditions under which the expulsion and exodus of Germans from the new Poland are being carried out. Between eight and nine million persons dwelt in those regions before the war. The Polish Government say that there are still 1,500,000 of these, not yet expelled, within their new frontiers. Other millions must have taken refuge behind the British and American lines, thus increasing the food stringency in our sector. But enormous numbers are utterly unaccounted for. Where are they gone, and what has been their fate? The same conditions may reproduce themselves in a modified form in the expulsion of great numbers of Sudeten and other Germans from Czechoslovakia. Sparse and guarded accounts of what has happened and is happening have filtered through, but it is not impossible that tragedy on a prodigious scale is unfolding itself behind the iron curtain which at the moment divides Europe in twain. I should welcome any statement which the Prime Minister can make which would relieve or at least inform us upon this very anxious and grievous matter.

Churchill, W. S. (1945, August 16). Final Review of the War. "Why Should We Fear for our Future?" *Hansard. HC Deb* (413) 70-133. Retrieved from <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1945/aug/16/debate-on-the-address>

The information Prime Churchill was looking for was a human disaster on an epic scale. See Appendix, *The Expulsion and Flight of the Baltic Germans and those from further East*.

Conclusion

The post-1945 systematic ethnic cleansing of 3.5 million German Bohemians/Sudeten, one third of the population of a country, approximately the size of Switzerland, constituted a massive break in Central European history. It did not just affect the area, now the Czech Republic, but the rest of Central Europe which had to become the host region for an avalanche of poverty-

stricken displaced people. The figure of 3.5 million expellees was approximately equal to the whole population of Denmark (1930).

After the expulsions from Czechoslovakia efforts were immediately directed at burying signs of the ancient German Bohemian cultural heritage and contribution to the old Kingdom of Bohemia. Everything that pointed to German origins and obvious signs of their past presence was officially removed. A directory of communities that were renamed between 1945 and 1946 runs to 102 pages, mainly eliminating names with German connotations (Sayer, 2000, p. 24).

The quest for a purely Czech homeland, devoid of the German population, ended in the clearance and plundering of large previously productive urban, industrial, and agricultural areas. After the Germans had gone, large tracts of the country with thousands of previously German villages and towns were left partially or totally empty. Areas previously cultivated, as well as houses, churches, school buildings, deserted and in various stages of decay, have been swallowed up by woodland, reverted to nature, or been dynamited and bulldozed, leaving no trace of their former existence. The de-population was eventually only partially off-set by a very diverse group of settlers who had no traditional links or relationship with the historic areas they had come to. After a while many moved back to their original home regions. The borderlands never reached their previous population density again, nor its former industrial and cultural importance. A thousand-year-old cultural, and intellectual inter-ethnic relationship connecting Czechs and Bohemian/Sudeten Germans had been abruptly and violently wiped out.

In his address on Christmas Eve 1946, President Beneš spoke of the special meaning and character of that Christmas, as for the first time it was being celebrated without the Germans of the country, which he called "our fatherland", in spite of the ethnically polyglot nature of the population up to then. He also stated that this fact had "liquidated" a big chapter in "our past" (Glötz 2004, p. 254). He had achieved his dream of a purely Slavic Czechoslovakia; nationalism, the scourge of much of 20th century political thinking, had triumphed. Soon he would be politically sidelined by his former Communist comrades and put under house arrest, a situation which caused him great agitation, and may have contributed to his death from a stroke in 1948 at the age of 62. His death was peaceful, in his bed, at his home. It was not accompanied by violence, degradation and deprivation in some nameless field, ditch, roadside or railway station.

To the disappointment of the Czechoslovak nationalists, wishing to finally live in a supposedly purely Slavic country, all was spoilt by the Communists winning the 1948 elections and delivering the country into Stalin's orbit. Thereafter the Czech and Slovak population found itself subject to a rigid and controlling Russian-dominated Communist regime, keeping it firmly behind the Iron Curtain for the next 40 years. The culprits of the immediate post-war anti-

German violence would never be identified and punished for crimes committed; that part of the past was buried and almost forgotten until after the fall of Communism.

Czechoslovakia as a country did not survive long after the fall of Communism in 1989. After years of tension with their Czech partners, the Slovaks seized the initiative in 1992 and proclaimed Slovakia a separate country on 1 January 1993. Western Czechoslovakia, the old Kingdom of Bohemia, became the Czech Republic.

Updates, May 2015

In an interview (2002) František Cerný, Czech Ambassador to Germany, 1998-2001, he remarked that too few Czechs did not make the difference between guilty Nazis and ordinary Sudeten people. However, a recent survey quoted in the Economist (K.S., May 2013) shows a gradual change taking place in Czech public opinion; 42% of Czechs surveyed found the expulsion of Sudeten Germans just (down from 52% in 1995), while 39% believed the opposite (up from 28% in 1995).

In May 2015 the Mayor of the town of Bruenn, Petr Vokral, conscious of what had happened during the humanitarian disaster of the Bruenn Death March, declared that the Town Council of Bruenn had passed a motion of regret for what had happened to thousands of German residents from their town in May 1945. The vote was carried in spite of the Communists voting against the motion, and representatives of two other parties, ODS and CSSD having abstained. A peace march in the opposite direction, from the Austrian border just north of Vienna towards Bruenn was being planned as an act of reconciliation.

<http://www.nachrichten.at/nachrichten/politik/aussenpolitik/Vertreibung-Starkes-Signal-aus-Bruenn;art391,1809998>

A powerful documentary entitled *1945: The Savage Peace* (BBC2, 24 May 2015). is essential viewing in context with this thesis. What is shown is shocking but represents only those episodes which were filmed: many more are recorded in Schieder's dossier, others remain unknown as there were no survivors, just a high number of missing persons whose fate has never been established.

Chapter 5

Gablonz- Neugablonz: a Bohemian/Sudeten Success Story

5.1 Gablonz and its population, a special case for research

Gablonz and the surrounding areas (approximately 100,000 inhabitants of which 16% were Czechs) were more or less completely ethnically emptied of their German inhabitants by 1945-46. Subsequently the town and district became a sleepy backwater having previously been an extremely busy industrial glass producing and exporting area of global importance with almost every family involved in that industry. The in-depth exploration of the background to the lives of the German participants in this study, before, during, and after their families' expulsions, provides the explanation of how they managed to turn adversity into success.

Here the story of the town's rise and fall and later partial rebirth in Bavaria is told, as well as what happened to its children, caught up in the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans from Czechoslovakia. Many of the special features and qualities in respect of Gablonz, town and District, and its people will become obvious in two detailed analyses in this chapter and the research results in the subsequent war child study. Though a special case within the context of Sudeten issues many aspects related to Gablonz and its population illustrate the fate of a whole region, unthinkable a mere 100 years ago.

The detailed descriptive elements in this chapter, the result of considerable research provide insight into the unique industrial and cultural past of the *town of Gablonz* and its surroundings. This background had a formative effect on the mind-sets of generations of *the people of Gablonz*, whose characteristics and identities were shaped by certain traditions present in their working and social lives. Over generations almost all its inhabitants were connected in some way to the glass and paste-jewellery manufacture known as Gablonz wares of which prodigious quantities were produced during the 150 years before the Second World War.

5.2 Gablonz: Birth place and First Home of Research Participants

The northern Bohemian birth-place of the German respondents, since 1945 the Czech town of Jablonec nad Nisou, was known to them as Gablonz an der Neisse. The town is situated near the source of the river Neisse, in a valley opening towards the larger town of Reichenberg/Liberec, 11 km away. Gablonz is surrounded by spruce, pine and fir covered mountains, known as the Isergebirge (Iser Mountain Range), which is dissected by deep valleys where many German villages nestled before the end of the last war. It was the much loved pre-

expulsion “Heimat”¹⁰ of the German respondents, children at the time, now living in Neugablonz/Bavaria.

Gablonz an der Neisse/Jablonec nad Nisou and Reichenberg/Liberec

Nearby Reichenberg, somewhat larger than Gablonz, also merits a mention as it was the second largest town in Bohemia after Prague before 1914, an important cultural, administrative, and industrial centre famous for the mass production of textiles, once called the “Manchester of Bohemia”. Social Democrats and Marxists, alongside German nationalists, had historically also been part of the Reichenberg’s political spectrum. Their attention focused on the problems of the underprivileged and under-represented Austrian industrial working class and more specifically on those employed in the textile factories of Reichenberg. From the 1870s onwards the town was the seat of the most important institutions of the movement for Austrian Social Democracy, periodically staging legal and illegal party conventions there. From 1877 the Central Committee of Austrian Social Democracy was based there for three-and-a-half years, the ideals of the Left being supported by several papers published in the town such as “Die Sozialpolitische Rundschau”, “Der Volksfreund”, “Der Freigeist”, and others (Prinz, 2002, pp. 376-377).

Considered by the Sudeten Germans the unofficial capital of Sudetenland since 1918, it had gained in political importance before and during the inter-war period because of the nationally-inspired “Volkstumskampf” (battle for Germanness) and was the seat of various “Volkstum” and Heimat institutions as well as German nationally orientated political organisations (Weger, 2008, p. 233). After the annexation it became the Nazi regime’s Northern Bohemian capital, the Gau Hauptstadt of Sudetenland, and main centre for the Reich’s institutions. It was the political base of the soon to be sidelined Konrad Henlein in the newly established Nazi administration from where the Nazi hierarchy officiated till 1945. While Reichenberg was politically important, politics in Gablonz had a local rather than regional dimension. The priority for local politicians and the municipal administration alike was the vitality and prosperity Gablonz and District, and to be of benefit to the locals in their efforts to produce huge quantities of “Kleinkunst” (small objects of art).

Gablonz was a working town of altogether different characteristics

from Reichenberg. Instead of a large mass of workers employed by and dependent on factory owners, the Gablonz production base was made up of a multitude of private workshops found in

¹⁰ *Heimat*: the home region where one’s roots are or were. References are often found in poetry and music, letters, biographies etc. People are often described as yearning for it. References about participants’ old and new Heimat can be found in the summary of answers to Questionnaires 2 and 4 in Part 2.

almost every house. Run by individuals, either on their own or in cooperation with others, a mainly self-employed, technically and artistically skilled workforce produced paste jewellery and glassware of high quality on an industrial scale. The category of wares produced, Gablonz wares, demanded individual attention to detail and a precision orientated approach from all workers to satisfy the quality requirements of the global market. Also being an efficient commercial and exporting centre helped to optimise the town's considerable prosperity before 1914. Over the years the pro-active attitudes and the vitality of community life shaped the personalities and mind-sets of the local population in a unique way, which, as will be shown, enabled them to show great fortitude and resilience at a very testing time in their lives.

The District of Gablonz, including the town and 40 villages around it in the mountains had a predominately German population before 1945 as shown by the demographic data below:

The District of Gablonz/Jablonec (Czechoslovak Census 1930)

Population	113,369 total (Rademacher, 2002) of which there were
	10,087 Czechs

(Sudetendeutscher Atlas, 1954, p. 7; Stuetz, & Zenkner, 1992, p. 91)

The Town of Gablonz/Jablonec (Czechoslovak Census 1930)

Population	33,958 total
Nationalities	27,017 Germans (79.50%)
	5,602 Czechs (16.50%)
other	132 (incl. 101 Jewish, 10 Hungarians)

(Czech Statistical Office, Information Services Section, 8 February 2013)

1939	28,771 total population (Rademacher, 2000)
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The decrease of the population figure by 5187 by 1939 is assumed to represent the number of people who left after the annexation.

The percentage of Czechs would fluctuate in the district as there had always been a tradition for Czechs to come in from outside to take advantage of employment opportunities. After the annexation most of the indigenous Czechs of Gablonz remained, while outsiders left. After 1939 passes (Durchlassscheine) were issued to enable Czech and German workers, known as "Grenzgaenger" (commuters), to cross into the Sudetengau from the Protectorate and vice versa.

The natural environment of northern Bohemia, mainly rough wooded mountain terrain, had only ever allowed small-scale subsistence farming. As a result the German population had developed ways to supplement their very modest living standards. As the raw materials for glass production, minerals, pot-ash and wood for charcoal were abundant, the emergence of glass industries in northern Bohemia started as far back as the Middle-Ages. The production of glass wares would take off in the late 18th century when the ample water supply from the mountains was being harnessed to power early grinding and polishing machinery replacing foot treadle appliances.

Early Gablonz was described by Carl Joseph Czoernig (pp.199-216) as having grown from an unimportant village to a flourishing industrial centre by 1829 within just 30 years, providing work for about 6,000 people in the town and district, specialising in a variety of glass wares. The considerable increase in the population of Gablonz town during the 19th century is shown by Dr. Susanne Roessler (1979) whose book on the industrial and social history of Gablonz-Neugablonz provides the following population figures for the town:

Gablonz: 1802 - 1,976 inhabitants; 1850 – 4,553; 1900 – 21,091 (Roessler 1979, p. 22).

But it was to be the production of fake pearls and glass beads which was to capture world markets early on. By the 1820s its world-wide export of fake pearls amounted to the staggering figure of 2,400,000,000 annually, pointing to the explosive development of the paste jewellery industry about to happen. After abandoning the production of blown vessels in favour of creating smaller-scale objects of moulded glass, known as “Pressglas”, the potential for creating an unlimited variety of objects had opened up. A great deal of experimenting was going on in Bohemian glass production during the 19th century with factories and domestic production units competing to produce ever more stunning colours and effects by adding different oxides to the glass flux and adding an infinite variety of surface texturing. To cite just one example, by adding gold and firing the molten glass twice, many shades of the famous Bohemian ruby glass could be made. Another revolutionary colour, iridescent greenish yellow, was produced by adding uranium oxide found in the Bohemian mine of Jacobsthal/ Jáchymov. Ignorance of the effects of radiation meant drinking vessels, tea and coffee sets as well as jewellery, which glowed in the dark, soon became a commercial success.

Finished glass products such as chandelier components, lantern shades, bottles, and a variety of other objects were originally transported from the mountains on hand carts and horse-drawn vehicles in months' long sales trips to towns in neighbouring countries, supplying glassware to Dresden, Munich, Vienna and further afield. During the winter months when Gablonz would typically have 100 days of snow per year, large horse-drawn sledges were used for transport up to the early 20th century (Vierke, 2006, pp. 456-457, pp. 481-486; Roessler, 1979; Stuetz and Zenkner 1992).

Soon enormous demand for sparkling paste jewellery developed looking like the real thing but at affordable prices. Production peaked during the late 19th and the early part of the 20th century just before the outbreak of the First World War. High-society ladies in America, Russia and South America as well as fashionable women in France, Britain and the rest of Europe would demand ever more jewellery items. Those as well as loose pearls, beads etc. would globally be sold in enormous quantities, while tribes, like the Masai, would specify special combinations of shapes and colours for their pearl and bead strings. It used to be said that even where no clothes were worn, people dressed in Gablonz beads. The world could not get enough of Gablonz “luxury wares”, a seemingly infinite stream of paste jewellery, brooches, hat-pins, badges, trinkets, glass buttons, beads and pearls in myriad shapes, sizes and colours as well as Christmas decorations etc. (Roessler, 1979; Stuetz and Zenkner, 1992; Vierke, 2006).

The development of modern traffic networks during the course of the 19th century accelerated the global spread of Gablonz wares. Larger manufacturing units were soon established alongside the cottage industries, with many small scale family-run production units in the town and the mountain villages continuing and expanding. In parallel the number of firms dealing in export and dispatch increased and this, in cooperation with the production units, created a uniquely integrated and successful working and marketing relationship.

5.3 Gablonz and Gablonzers, special in more than one way

Gablonz town had become an industrial centre where all the elements came together in one place which made the term “Gablonz”, the fashion jewellery capital of the world, and “Gablonz wares” (Gablonzer Waren) famous and unique.

Partially due to Gablonz’s isolated position in the Northern Bohemian Mountains, special features in the attitudes of generations of the locals such as self-reliance, industriousness and pulling together in difficult times were the norm. On that basis certain unique working practices had evolved from the early cottage industries such as cooperation within family units, friends and neighbours. This close personal and working relationship was quite different from that among workers in the factories of the Northern Bohemian industrial belt such as in nearby Reichenberg. Factory based workers would have been subject to different group dynamics, not necessarily generating the same impulses for purposeful relationships and cooperation as happened in Gablonz.

As bigger, flexible and more efficient working models evolved transcending cottage industry practices, workers increasingly joined production groups, though never lost their traditional group-orientated attitudes. These created a mind-set where cooperative working methods were

regarded as natural. Working within production groups workers were at all times an important part of inter-linked, multi-branched chains of highly skilled specialists all united in one overall task, the completion of a final, often stunning, product. Everybody's contribution was valued but depended on the skills and willingness of others to enable complex objects to be manufactured. Therefore almost all finished products were always the sum total of several people's' work. Being mostly self-employed and independent allowed operatives to offer their skills whenever and wherever they were needed, which fostered flexibility and entrepreneurial attitudes not only vital to industrial and commercial prosperity before and after the First World War but also after re-settlement in Bavaria.

At this point it is useful to explain how the production chains worked. Many local, mainly Jewish exporters entertained permanent outlets abroad, and were therefore aware of the types of wares desired in different parts of the world. They were always the first link in a chain, as after sales trips abroad they would convey specific fashion preferences back to the Iser Mountains, not only from developed countries but also of populations and tribes in remote areas. New designs and templates would then be created (Vierke, 2006, pp. 456-464) which would be converted into objects by people trained in all the glass and jewellery crafts. They in turn depended on the producers and suppliers of metal, glass and chemicals, followed by the stone-cutters, grinders, polishers and engravers. They then liaised with the metalworkers who made the settings, as well as enamellers and finishers. Others, who helped the industry to out-perform competitors from other countries, were the industrial chemists who developed the formulae for stunning and much admired colours for the glass used in Gablonz wares. Supplying appropriate machinery to support the industry highly qualified engineers and tool-makers provided the skills and know-how to enable workers to achieve the highest standards.

The greater the demands of the world market the more uniquely integrated the production base became while preserving its flexibility and fluidity. The Czechs of the town and district of Gablonz were also part of this unique and integrated working system where everybody contributed towards mutual productivity and prosperity. The tradition of producing objects in cooperatives flourished up to 1914 and continued between 1918 and 1939 until war-related requirements stopped the old industries.

In line with the rapid expansion of Gablonz industries during the 19th.century many educational establishments were founded which provided the basis for a well educated population. Artistic and skills-training took place not only in firms but in special schools and vocational colleges. Engineering colleges training metal workers and tool- and mould-makers, and laboratories working on ever more complex processes for the production of coloured glass, metal dips and enamelling, all helped to constantly improve the production of ever more dazzling products. Supporting the vital commercial and exporting side of Gablonz industries, business academies and language schools were founded in Gablonz long before these were thought of in other

Bohemian cities (Roessler, 1979, p. 26). In addition to that, Gablonz had a Gymnasium which sent its graduates to Prague, Vienna and German Universities.

The target-and-quality orientated group-based precision manufacturing system, referred to as the “Gablonz Verbundindustrie” (*Verbund* implies bound together, inter-linked) continues in Neugablonz to this day. Nowadays a variety of highly technical, industrial components, requiring precision work, are manufactured besides jewellery and objets d’art.



Just one example of the diverse products produced in Gablonz with modern versions still manufactured in Neugablonz

(http://www.brautkleid-brautkleider.net/product_info.php/products_id/1337)

The influence of work-related traditions on the mentality of the population of Gablonz

The previous section demonstrated how cooperative work practices were a prerequisite for the production of Gablonz wares. Workers’ mind-sets, characteristics and identity had over time developed in a way, typical for the population of Gablonz and surroundings, which made it special. The long tradition of close cooperation and high degree of inter-connection and inter-dependence in the working environment had over time created a special community atmosphere. The long-established “group” method of production had over generations also fostered close personal relations between work colleagues and their families, bridging the gap between family life, work, and leisure. People were involved in a multitude of joint community activities, as Gablonzers were exceptionally inter-active in all manner of private and public initiatives.

At this stage it is appropriate to introduce the concept of “Social Capital”, a term first used by Professor Robert Putnam whose research demonstrated the value to communities of certain civic virtues such as civic engagement, solidarity, trust and social structures of cooperation in associations.

Putnam has since the 1990s emphasised the benefit of social capital for the welfare of communities. He first referred to social capital in his work on the civic traditions in the regions of

Italy (1993) and expanded on its significance in his later book on the state of democracy in America (2000).¹¹ In both these works he identified several indicators of social capital and demonstrated how their presence could significantly enhance peoples' lives and the efficiency of their communities. The next section illustrates the fact that all the civic virtues identified above were present in abundance in the community life of Gablonz.

5.4 Clubs and Associations. The Vibrancy of old Gablonz Society

Putnam states that "One key indicator of civic sociability must be the vibrancy of associational life" (Putnam, 1993, p. 91). He was able to demonstrate that the number of clubs and associations frequented by people in a certain areas was a key indicator for the health of their community and its civic efficiency. That Gablonz fits the criteria almost perfectly is shown by the author's research in the *Kataster*, the registry of associations of the District of Gablonz, held in the archive of the town of Jablonec. After 1848 the growing confidence of the bourgeoisie, German and Czech, had started to play an increasing role in civic affairs in both ethnic communities which considerably invigorated community life. Fifteen hundred German and Czech associations and clubs were in existence before 1939 supporting a great variety of cultural, sporting, political and intellectual activities. 308 associations were based in the town itself, of which 259 were German and 49 served the Czech community (Associations and Clubs, "Vereine". Gablonz/Jablonec nad Nisou).

In busy, vibrant and rich Gablonz with inhabitants who were cosmopolitan, urbane and sophisticated in outlook and identity, the clubs, societies, and associations brought people together in great numbers. Founded mainly before 1914, well supported and a basis for a range of varied activities, many clubs and societies owed their existence to the generous financial support of wealthy citizens who were proud to be seen as benefactors in a multitude of community and charitable schemes (Stuetz & Zenkner, 1992, pp. 229-276).

Detailed information on the associational life of Gablonz can be found in the Appendix which demonstrates the variety of interests and activities of its population.

Much of what is referred to above in respect of the community life of the citizens of Gablonz and later Neugablonz could almost be regarded as an example par excellence suitable to prove yet again the validity of Putnam's remarkable social theory. Part 2 provides answers to questions

¹¹ Putnam, R. D., Leonardi, R., & Nanetti, R.Y. (1993). *Making Democracy Work*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

about the post-expulsion individual and collective resilience of the Gablonz expellees with reference to social capital after a life-changing break in their lives.

5.4 Gablonz Industries 1848-1938

A short outline of the early industrial history of Gablonz as well as its commercial activities has already been provided in previous sections, but in order to add to the understanding of the mind-set of Gablonzers, more analysis on the periods relevant to the rise and fall of Gablonz will highlight the factors crucial to their success then and later. The following trade figures and a summary of the considerable commercial and export activity are included to demonstrate how the energy and industriousness of the population made their small provincial, out-of-the way Northern Bohemian town special.

Though trade after 1918 never reached pre-First World War levels, joint German-Czech and Jewish participation in the industry continued, before it was abruptly stopped by the outbreak of the Second World War. Between 1918 and 1938/1939 the industrial production in the town and district progressively contracted, leaving considerably fewer large firms, and somewhat more than 2000 small ones, and very small family sized enterprises (Roessler, 1979, p. 26).

However, in 1928 Gablonz wares still accounted for 5.2% of the total export of the new state of Czechoslovakia, a sizeable contribution to its revenue. Between 1918 and 1928 their exports amounted to 1.5 million tons in weight. Several hundred exporting firms, many under Jewish ownership before 1938, were crucial to the continuing success of the industry as 50% of all Gablonz products during Habsburg times and almost all its production during the First Czechoslovak Republic was destined for export. Many merchants handled not only the multi-lingual and geographically diverse sales transactions but had also instituted a regular payment structure to the working population. The employment statistics of 1938 for the District of Gablonz still demonstrate the level of importance of its industries as in a population of just over 100,000 people in the district approximately 90,000 Germans Czechs and Jews were involved in some way with the local industries (Roessler, 1979, p. 17). In 1938 year 4,136 firms were registered in the glass and paste-jewellery manufacturing sector with a much reduced output in comparison to 1895. Then 4364 firms produced a revenue greater than that of the crown-land of Dalmatia. On the commercial side 520 exporting firms employed 35,000 persons in the district of Gablonz (Roessler, 1979, p. 26).

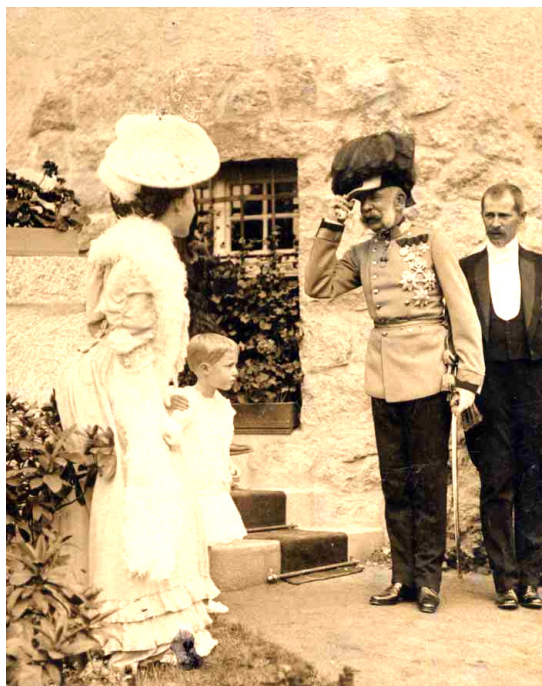


Figure 6 The Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph on a visit to Gablonz in 1905

As shown below packaging agents and the local postal service handled unbelievable numbers of final products from Gablonz town and district for dispatch to the farthest corners of the world

The activity of the Gablonz Postal services, 1928 (Roessler, 1979, p. 34).

Letters:	20,000,000
Recorded letters	550,000
Items of value/money	60,000
Packets	650,000
Telegrams	120,000
Phone calls	3,250,000
Foreign calls	250,000

After the creation of Czechoslovakia and the disappearance of the pre-First World War internal market, production became exclusively export-orientated. India and America became the largest markets for Gablonz products. In 1912 Austrian Lloyd had commissioned a freight and passenger liner, "The Gablonz", specifically for this trade. A particular sales hit were multi-coloured glass bangles for the Indian market. In just one year, 1924, at a time when

competition from Japan was already negatively affecting the export trade, 354,000 cases with 130 million bangles were shipped to the subcontinent (Roessler, 1979, p. 23).

From 1929 onwards the effects of the Great Depression and competition from the Far East, combined with what German manufacturers viewed as lack of support from the Czechoslovak Government, began to damage industries in German Bohemia. In the case of Gablonz the situation was not helped by the intention of Czech politicians to put successful German owned factories under Czech management (Nostrification). Only Czechs wishing to start their own business were given generous support by the state, not Germans. At the same time the establishment of a new, independent Czech glass industry in nearby Eisenbrod (Železný Brod) was funded with lavish Czech state subsidies, while German firms were struggling (Roessler 1979, p. 35-38). Their industries had started to decline, with the highest unemployment in the years of 1934-35, when people took any job they could get. All these factors substantially contributed to an atmosphere of simmering resentment against the Prague Government on the part of the locals and the majority of the Sudeten Germans, which would influence their political choices in the 1930s. Perhaps this also goes some way to explain the Gablonzers' support for Henlein in the elections of May/June 1938.

5.5 Gablonz Wares and the Importance of the Jews

Up to the late 18th century very few Jews considered Gablonz and surroundings as a viable place to live and trade from. Gablonz had been an unimportant village and its somewhat remote situation was less than encouraging for the few migrant Jewish traders who considered switching to trading glass wares.

After the middle of the 19th century, however, the explosive expansion of the Gablonz industries went in parallel with an increase of Jewish glass merchants and exporters. Their role in the growing prosperity of the town was stressed in a publication on the history of Gablonz in 1894 by Adolf Lillie of the local teachers' association, which is contained in an article by Sigmund Urabin (1934, pp. 145-48). It tells us how many Jews soon played an important part in civic life as exemplified by a certain Dr. Hermann Adler who chaired the German Schools Association (Deutscher Schulverein) for many years. Urabin wrote about the history of the Jews in Bohemian districts in the 1930s and listed Gablonz Jews by profession as exporters, producers, suppliers of raw materials such as metals and paste-glass stones as well as being merchants, doctors, advocates, professors, clerks in trading firms and skilled workers (Urabin, 1934, pp. 145-48).

In 1870 the Israeli Kultus Association was founded; by 1877 50 Jewish families lived in Gablonz, and a plot was bought to serve as a Jewish Cemetery as previously interment had to

take place in Reichenberg. In 1885 the Jewish Women's Association was founded. The Synagogue, called the "Temple", was built in 1892, with 160 seats for men and 126 for women; three years later 517 Jews were known to be living in the town. In 1903 the Temple Choir was formed with singers often supplemented by the non-Jewish members of the town's other choirs and vice-versa.

Urabin also reports that by 1934 the number of people known as Jewish had supposedly grown to 900. This discrepancy with the figure quoted earlier of only 101 Jews in Gablonz (Census 1930) is due to the fact that in any census, Jews were listed according to religion. However, the majority of Jewish people in Czechoslovakia did not define themselves by religion; they would describe themselves either as Czech, or German and be entered as such on census forms. The number of assimilated Jews was always an unknown factor, the majority identifying themselves as German-speakers or Czechs. A very large proportion of the Jewish population in Gablonz were foreign traders, such as Poles, Russians, Reich Germans, Austrians, Rumanians, Hungarians, as well as from Turkey and Egypt and other countries. Quite a few were owners of stores, whose permanent abode was in France and America; they only spent a few months of every year in Gablonz.

After the annexation it was hoped that exports would increase again, but the indigenous Jewish merchants were no longer present as global markets had disappeared and Jewish buyers from abroad stayed away. The plan for an economic revival helped by credits from the Reich was unsuccessful as the many Jewish and Czech businesses in Gablonz did not qualify for financial assistance and had to close down. Compared to the figure of 520 export firms listed in 1938, there were still 420 left in 1939 with about 3,000 employees, but five months later, 60 companies had closed (Osterloh, 2006, p. 384).

799 persons in district of Gablonz were known to belong to the Jewish faith (Stuetz & Zenkner, 1992, p.159). Once Nazi influence started to permeate public life, it appears that not everybody agreed with the Nazi attitude towards the Jews. Gablonz people were reported to have shown their sympathy to Jewish co-citizens. In debates on the streets the population openly made accusations against individual members of the Nazi party. When the Gablonz synagogue was burnt, one of the Czech respondents testified that with the Czechs, many Germans did not agree with this act of vandalism. One German respondent wrote that outsiders had been brought in as no locals wanted to have a part in the destruction of the "temple".

Jews did, however, have a bad time after 1938. First they tried to find sanctuary in Prague from where those who were fortunate in getting visas would emigrate abroad as soon as was possible. Those who stayed were interned in Theresienstadt to be moved later to concentration camps further east. By summer 1941 Jews were no longer part of the economy of Gablonz. The population believed them to have returned to America and France where many were thought to have had shops and stores (Osterloh, 2006, pp. 384-385).

According to documents of the last Rabbi of Gablonz, Dr. George Vida, a graduate of the University of Breslau/Wrocław, he led a group of the Jewish religious community out of Gablonz one night in September 1938. They left their homes with what they could carry and removed their precious Torah from the Synagogue. Via a circuitous route they reached the safety of America in 1939. The Torah, which had been sent to a depot in Paris marked "destination unknown", eventually also arrived in the United States (George Vida Collection; Vida Emmie: Recollections).

Gone were the days when the Jewish population had been a very integrated part of the Bohemian community, after Emperor Franz Joseph had granted them permission to settle in Austria-Hungary to escape Russian and Polish persecution. They took part in the activities of many societies and clubs, in many cases supporting the German Bohemian national aspirations vis-à-vis the Czechoslovak government during the inter-war years. Christians used to sing in the choir of the Temple in Gablonz, while the Rabbi and Archdeacon would have a regular get-together in the Gablonz Hotel Krone every Sunday. Fortunately most Gablonz Jews were able to leave early, before the arrival of German troops in 1938. The fate of 75, deported in 1941, is officially unknown (Stuetz & Zenkner, 1992, p.159). It is assumed that they perished in death camps.

5.6 The Effect of the Annexation and the Second World War on Gablonz

After the Annexation Jewish property was confiscated by the Reich, a process called "Aryanisation". As referred to by Osterloh (2006, pp. 379-385) in relation to Gablonz the closure of previously Jewish firms was immediately followed by calamitous economic consequences on their workforce. It was also known that many members of the new Reich German ruling class moved into Jewish houses and apartments and according to Bryant (2007, p. 84) "... Reich Germans obtained all the best businesses."

The contentious attitude of the new Reich German masters created considerable annoyance in the Sudeten German population including in Gablonz, which is also hinted at in several comments the German respondents made within this context. According to one of the respondents, the daughter of a former mayor of Gablonz, the post-annexation euphoria in October 1938 evaporated after three days. Many Gablonz officials, including the recently elected Mayor, Oswald Wondrak, were later substituted or relegated to inferior positions. The new Reich officials brought in over the heads of the Gablonz own administration threw their weight about and showed themselves quite ill-prepared to steer its industries. Moreover the wares produced by Gablonz industries were looked down upon as inferior and not worthy of support; the description "rubbish industries" in the SS magazine "Das Schwarze Korps", struck the locals as particularly offensive (Roessler, 1979, p. 42). One of the many examples of the

Reich's centralising strategies falling short of Sudeten needs was the money made available for Gablonz by the Deutsche Bank just after the annexation. It did not even cover payments for one day, the first Friday, payment day (Roessler, 1979, 34, p.).

The Second World War brought significant changes to the ordinary lives of the population, now expected to act in accordance with NS principles and directives from Berlin. The economic strategists cared little for the jewellery industry and the subsequent war proved to be the death knell for the Gablonz wares (Stuetz & Zenkner, 1992, pp. 132-133). Metal, glass and other raw materials were requisitioned, and producers had to switch to the manufacture of components needed for the war effort, for which the skilled labour force proved indispensable. However, the local German men of fighting age had been called up which meant that Czechs from the Protectorate, permitted to cross the border to Gablonz as "Grenzgaenger" (cross border commuter) by means of a Durchlassschein, as well as foreign workers and prisoners of war, were used to make up for the shortage of man-power. When the former mayor of Gablonz, Oswald Wondrak, was conscripted for active service he was put in charge of French prisoners of war working in the Zeiss factory on the outskirts of Gablonz. In 1956 one of their group visited Neugablonz with a message from the others, stressing that they were always treated correctly and humanely during their time in Gablonz and wanted to convey their thanks (Simon, 2003, p. 38).

In respect of respondents' families, they had the same problems as elsewhere during the war years when women and children, often having to support elderly relations, were left to cope as best they could on progressively dwindling resources, while men from Gablonz were serving as soldiers. All German respondents, whose fathers were called up described the pain of missing them, and wrote of their own and their families' fears and worries.

To their later worldwide damnation Sudeten people in general had felt indebted to the Reich for returning their areas to them while also hoping for an economic upturn in their region. They seemed to dutifully go about their daily business not going out of their way to be critical of the new masters. Those, however, tended to regard them and all Austrians with some derision as an inferior branch of the Aryan race on account of their racially mixed ancestry.

The indigenous Czechs of Gablonz had remained calm (Osterloh, 2006, pp. 181-182, fn. 786) and did not draw attention to themselves they were after all greatly outnumbered by Germans. As respondents were German children living in a predominantly German environment, knowledge about the quality of life as far as Czech families were concerned did not appear to have been part of their experience, nor does it seem to have been part of post-war discussions with their parents. At that stage families would still have remembered their unhappy times as victims of expulsion by Czechs, and as is obvious from respondents' testimonies, rather than analysing the Czech-German past in front of the children, parents were busy working towards a

better future. To provide more information Czech survivors of pre-1945 times were actively sought in an effort to learn more from their additional testimonies.

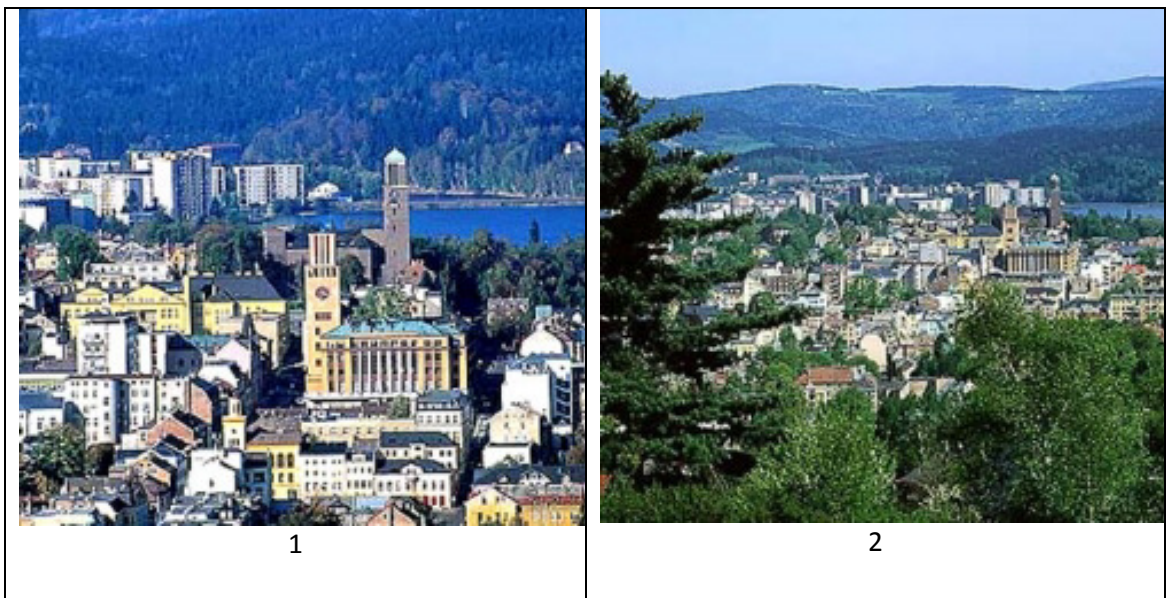
5.7 Gablonz after the end of the war and the start of the expulsions. Where it all ended ...

After the end of the war, Reich German officials handed the administration of the town over to Czechs from adjoining districts (7 and 8 May 1945) and left the next day. Though there were efforts by the new Czech administrator in charge of Gablonz to prevent trouble, groups of unregulated revolutionary cadres soon poured into the area. Taking part in public beatings, torture and indulging in certain unrepeatable sadistic excesses, they used the spirit of the Revolution as a pre-text for their behaviour. The 75 members of the newly formed state security police, sent to Gablonz from Prague, did nothing to stop these events (Stuetz & Zenkner, 1992 pp.38-40). Czech brutality affecting the population in nearby Landskron was mentioned by some participants as family members had lived there. Such atrocities are still part of the collective memory of Sudeten expellee descendants.

From the end of May 1945, as elsewhere in Sudetenland, Gablonz Germans had to wear white armbands with N (Nemec-German) on, were subject to a curfew between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m., and were forbidden to use public transport or leave their homes on foot or by bicycle without permission. They were not allowed to speak German in public, or walk on pavements, which several of the respondents remember as they as children were pushed off into the road and to the end of queues by strangers from outside the area. They were also spat at if they spoke German and could not understand why. Ration cards for Germans only entitled the owner to small quantities of bread and sugar and some skimmed milk for children but no sections for meat, fat or eggs. To survive these items could only be procured at high prices from Czechs on the black market, or through bartering. German schools were closed, and theatres and cinemas were no longer open to Germans. Hospitals in Gablonz and district, now without German medical staff, would only provide the most basic treatment and then put German patients on stretchers into the courtyard, even women who had just given birth. This lack of care was observed by one male respondent who had helped to get his unconscious uncle to hospital who had been shot by a Russian soldier who had burgled his house. German adults and boys of what was considered working age had to report to the employment office and were assigned to forced labour. As a number of the former children have testified, they and their mothers were transported on lorries to the Czech interior to be unloaded in village and town squares where they were chosen as workers by Czech locals, as if in a slave market (Stuetz & Zenkner, 1992, pp.43-49).

According to Stuetz and Zenkner (1992, pp. 50-61) the expulsion of the Germans from Gablonz and surroundings started on 15 June 1945. Everything previously written about the expulsions also applies to Gablonz, but in spite of considerable suffering by the German population after the end of the war, any violence committed by perpetrators from outside the region did not reach the levels experienced in other Bohemian areas. Unlike events which took place in nearby Reichenberg it appears that the majority of Gablonz Czechs, resident of old, having lived and worked alongside the Germans, had little appetite to “vent their fury” (a frequently used term about Czech anger against Germans) on their German co-citizens.

On 15 June 1945 the first “wild” expulsions began. Crowds of Red Guards poured into the town accompanied by so-called Partisans. All were heavily armed, descended on the nicest areas and hauled about 1,000 people out of houses, apartments and offices. Confused and totally unprepared, these were forced into lorries which took them to the border with Poland. As the Polish border guards refused to allow them across, they were forced to camp out in a swampy woodland area where they remained for a week without shelter in the clothes they had on when they left their houses. They, including pregnant women, children, babies and old people, were then forced by truncheon-wielding thugs to march back to a camp on the outskirts of Gablonz. From there they, like all other expellees, were later transported out of Czechoslovakia in cattle wagons. Respondents’ traumatic memories about the pre-expulsion period and their families’ expulsion are recorded in their testimonies in Part 2.



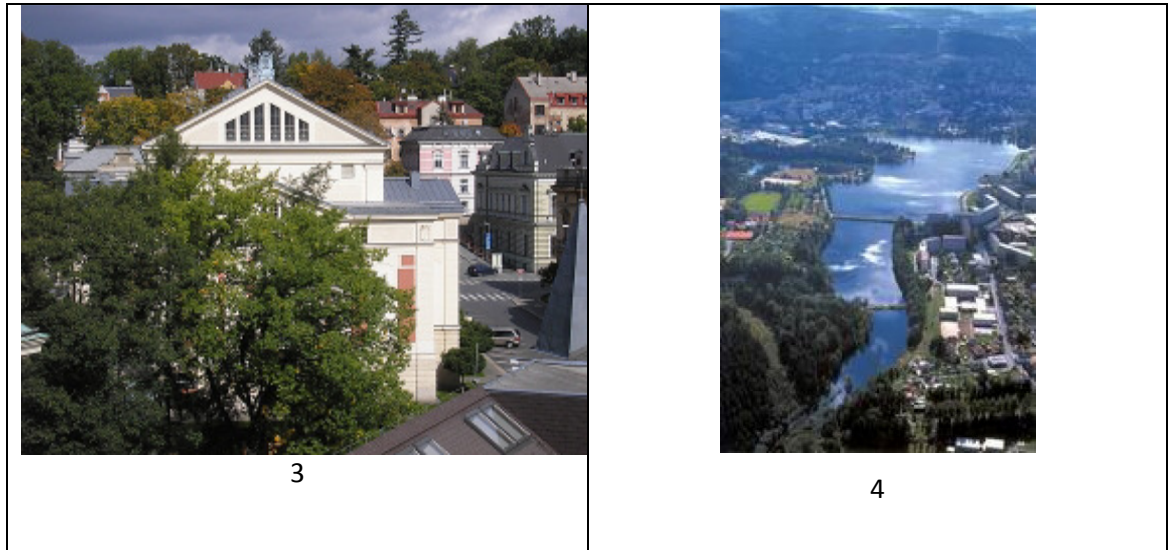


Figure 7 Views of Gablonz - Jablonec nad Nisou

1. <http://old.turistik.cz/turistik!/imgnew/obec/5597/pohled-na-centrum-jablonec-nad-nisou-14240.jpg>

2. <http://old.turistik.cz/turistik!/imgnew/obec/5597/pohled-na-centrum-jablonec-nad-nisou-14240.jpg>

3. <http://old.turistik.cz/turistik!/imgnew/obec/5597/6785620070917091129.jpg>

4. <http://old.turistik.cz/turistik!/imgnew/obec/5597/jablonecka-prehrada-jablonec-nad-nisou-14002.jpg>

5.8 The Gablonz Germans and their cultural footprint are history

Gablonz was well known throughout Czechoslovakia as a prosperous town, home to a sophisticated bourgeoisie with quite a few grand houses, the properties of industrialists, exporters, merchants, doctors, headmasters etc. During the post-1945 chaos this town like other German settlements attracted so-called “gold-diggers” from outside as well as new settlers moving into German owned properties, sometimes even before they were officially sealed to be assigned to new occupants. The most attractive buildings in the best locations were targeted first; contents would be taken over to the last teaspoon, or plundered, with items dispersed, sold or just trashed.

Properties less appealing or conveniently situated, particularly those in villages, were just plundered of their contents and anything else useable was taken such as doors, windows, staircases and wooden floors, which were frequently used as fuel (König & König, 2010, p. 51).

Having been stripped they were left to fall down during the years to come, some to be demolished at a later stage. Having chosen a house to live in, many new settlers, not previously used to maintain a property, would just stay long enough until places became uninhabitable, before moving on. Many once imposing Bohemian properties were consigned to history in post-war Czechoslovakia, as under Communism both the will and money to restore previously German properties was lacking. The loss of their beloved Heimat, and the neglect or destruction of their previous properties caused great heart-ache to the parent generation of respondents.

During and after the 1945-46 expulsions, the Gablonz region underwent a profound change. To the disappointment of the local Czechs, many of the new settlers had little to offer in the way of skills. One Czech respondent went to work with Germans left behind, another one tried in vain to uphold the previous high standards at the training college in Gablonz, but under the Communists equipment and machinery was stripped out for the metal. It transpired later that money could be earned from the old industries as paste jewellery became popular in Russia when it was produced again, but on substandard equipment. As far as former German possessions were concerned, schools and other large buildings in Gablonz were filled with expropriated goods, arranged in special categories for e.g. furniture, clothes, bedding etc. similar to department stores, all goods being offered at low prices. Anything not needed was thrown away. Children would have great fun smashing household items like china and glass, dumped in the local woods (von Arburg, Borodziej, & Kostjaschow, 2008, p. 144). In Sudetenland as well as Bohemia and Moravia many valuables, items of fine art, valuable china, early Bohemian and Art Nouveau glass etc. were lost through ignorance and neglect. If their worth was recognised, objects often ended up being offered years later in the flea-markets of Vienna, Munich and other places. No valuables or memorabilia, certificates etc. were permitted to be taken. Some Gablonz Germans nevertheless found ways of hiding money, photos and some valuables in their luggage. As there was still a feeling among the expellees the state of affairs would be reversible, many buried valuables which they could never retrieve.

According to some respondents' testimony their families' original possessions such as pictures, furniture etc. were well looked after by the new owners and are in some cases still in situ where they were left. A number of friendships between old and new owners and their descendants have been established and continue to be maintained. One female participant visits the old family house frequently and even now, 70 years on, she has to fight back tears when confronted with the family's possessions, as she remembers them.

After the collapse of Communism, individual properties could be privately owned again, which resulted in greater pride in the appearance of the urban landscape of the Czech Republic. That, coupled with increasing care of the environment, has meant that many areas are again resembling standards in the rest of Europe. The town and its attractive surroundings live on in

the memories of the older generation but have mostly disappeared into the mist of the past as far as younger generations are concerned.

Nowadays Jablonec is a pleasant sleepy town, with an interesting museum reminding visitors and its new settlers of its artistic past. In contrast to the several thousand pre-war production units there is one major factory left, Jablonex, producing paste-glass jewellery, and about a dozen smaller production units for pearls, beads and other components for the fashion jewellery sector.

Much progress in dealing with the past has been made through initiatives like the twinning of German towns where expellees settled and their original home towns in the Czech Republic. This has resulted in good relations between the original German and present Czech inhabitants. The Bavarian town of Kaufbeuren–Neugablonz and the North Bohemian Jablonec nad Nisou (Gablonz) have also developed close ties, characterised by mutually productive cooperation and genuine friendships as a result. These have been characterised by great interest in one another's history by the younger generation and are an example of people reaching out to one another without animosity, in spite of the past.

5.9 Neugablonz. A new beginning

Post-1945 trains crammed full of human cargo rolled unceasingly from Czechoslovakia across the borders into war-ravaged Germany, added to by thousands of other German families. They were part of huge treks, fleeing or being forcibly transported from the countries' former eastern provinces and settlements in South Eastern Europe. The survivors of this human mass of approximately 14-16 million people with an estimated number of 3 million plus children needed to be given shelter and food. They were directed away from the bombed German cities into country areas, where municipalities were given the task of finding accommodation and sustenance for the new arrivals as well as places in schools and work. With resources massively overstretched, the locals felt overwhelmed by the thousands suddenly on their doorstep.

Bavaria became home to 1,026,355 Bohemian Germans from Sudetenland (BRD Census 1950, Sudetendeutsche Landsmannschaft), including research participants' families. They were accommodated in schools, barracks or with farmers in and around Kaufbeuren, sometimes forcibly. Respondents remember the stress and aggravation brought about by overcrowding and poor living conditions suffered by their families, with knock-on effects affecting the children's lives long after.

As has been shown by the German testimonies, the new arrivals were initially made to feel distinctly unwanted, something still vividly remembered. The locals looked down upon them and they felt inferior on account of being and looking poor and not speaking the local Bavarian

dialect. At school and elsewhere they were often condescendingly called “Fluechtlingskinder”, children of refugees, something they bitterly resented and fought against. They stressed time and again, that their families had not run away, but were forced to leave their homes, houses that were as good as or better than those of their local class-mates. It also did not help that their families had industrial aspirations, priorities completely incomprehensible to the local farming folk. However, attitudes soon changed to mutual benefit.

Having explained the unique qualities of the people of Old Gablonz before, what is described next proves that the old all-embracing and cooperative community spirit could not be destroyed and was present during and after the expulsions. With transports arriving daily over many weeks and months during 1945 and 1946, a group of enterprising expellees became active trying to secure a future of their compatriots. Men from Gablonz with contacts in Bavarian government departments tirelessly worked on plans to re-establish their old industries. They scoured the land for a suitable site to start again and once they had found what they were looking for on the outskirts of Kaufbeuren, they went about to attract sufficient Gablonzers to make the rebirth of their old town possible. The fact that the post-war occupying forces wanted to disperse expellees and refugees as much as possible did not stop the Old Gablonzers from displaying placards on the railway stations receiving expellees, telling them to come to Kaufbeuren where they would start up again. Up to 20,000 Old Gablonzers from the town and district would follow that call.

No records of the industrial processes or previous customer lists were allowed to be taken from old Gablonz, but the expellees carried their original skills and specialist knowledge in their heads to the host country. This stood them in good stead once they started up again in Neugablonz, which with became the largest of several locations to restart Gablonz-style glass production in Germany, Austria and abroad after 1945. It is a testimony to the collective spirit of the Old Gablonzers which refused to be broken.

Their previous “can do” attitude and absolute commitment to their work, the quality of their products, as well as their willingness to cooperate within production groups turned out to be their salvation. In a very short time the successful restart of their industries was achieved, which became the new base for their livelihoods from 1945 onwards. As we shall see, Neugablonz rose phoenix-like, literally, from the ashes in an area on the outskirts of Kaufbeuren blown up by the Americans.

At the time the Gablonzers were expelled, there were, apart from the glassware and jewellery specialists, many intellectuals and professionals among them in all walks of life, many with advanced degrees in a variety of disciplines. Their know-how and professional skills, particularly in respect of the technical sciences, was crucial in identifying the area later to

become Neugablonz as a viable choice. A working party started by Dipl. Ing.¹² Erich Huschka (born 1912), known as the “Father of Neugablonz”, had encouraged Old Gablonzers to gather in one place from 1946 onwards and start their industries again outside Kaufbeuren. There was also continuing cooperation with other groups in various locations in post-war West and East Germany and Austria.

The area chosen was on the outskirts of Kaufbeuren, previously an industrial area of 320 hectares, covered in dense mature woodland. It was identified as being an ideal area for a restart. It had been used as a site for the production of explosives by The German Dynamit AG. There were 160 specially fortified concrete buildings and bunkers on site and barracks used during the war as accommodation for foreign workers. Some of these would decide to stay on after the war had finished, Communism ruling their home-countries by that time.

Huschka and his colleagues tirelessly worked on convincing the Bavarian authorities of the merits of the project; it would after all make economic sense to enable the expellees to work again. He also eventually secured the support of the American occupying forces, but not before they had dynamited the whole site, reducing it to a chaotic state, strewn with large concrete boulders, steel girders sticking out in between. He asked a former class-mate, Dipl. Ing. Gerhart Stuetz, to undertake the technical tasks, while negotiations were still going on. This he did unofficially, clandestinely crawling around in the undergrowth for months, surveying the thickly wooded site, fenced with barbed wire, as access was strictly forbidden. Once permission for the area to be leased was given in the late 1940s, the town planning side and that of the infrastructure of the project was taken care of by the Bavarian ministries in cooperation with the local authorities of Kaufbeuren and representatives of Gablonz expellees. The outcome of these efforts can be seen in the series of pictures below, illustrating the times after respondents had arrived there as children. The name Kaufbeuren-Neugablonz was officially approved on 8 August, 1952 by Wilhelm Hoegner, the Bavarian Minister of the Interior who publically signed the relevant charter.

By 1946 many thousands of Gablonzers had taken up residence where possible and started up production units in bunkers, cellars and the ruins of the former munitions factory. The construction workshops and houses started as soon as post-war credits became available in the late 40s. Having secured initial glass supplies from a Bavarian source, machinery and tools were built using metal tank plates and shell cases while tin from discarded American food cans ended up in the settings for their early post-war jewellery items. After years of austerity these could not be manufactured fast enough to satisfy post-war demand and sold like hot cakes. Having reconnected with some of their original Jewish exporters, now living in America, they formed their own trading companies, and very quickly restarted cooperation with other ex-

¹² The title “Diplom Ingenieur” refers to a university degree in technology subjects.

Gablonz production centres which had sprung up in other areas. One of my respondents told me, that on his arrival at in 1946, he found the site, later to be called Neugablonz, buzzing with activity like a bee-hive.

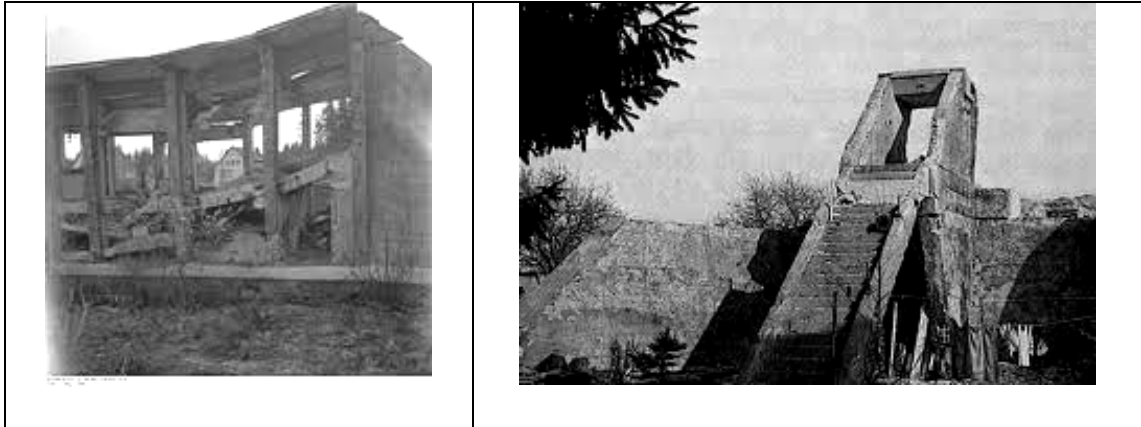


Figure 8 Post-war life and work restarts surrounded by rubble. One of the first houses can be seen through the gaps behind the ruin on the left.

(Bundesarchiv B 145 Bild-F005655-0010, Neu-Gablonz bei Kaufbeuren-Schwaben.jpg)



Figures 9 1953: Early workshops in the foreground - apartment blocks and houses towards the rear are beginning to appear (Noack, 2006)

(<http://wissen.spiegel.de/wissen/image/show.html?did=45964814&aref=image036/2006/02/17/ROSPC200600100640070.PDF&thumb=false>)



Figure 10 Neugablonz, on the outskirts of Kaufbeuren, Bavaria
 (<http://www.dittert-online.de/kaufbeuren-neugablonz/luftbilder.htm>)

Nowadays Neugablonz resembles a pleasant looking post-war German town with all the facilities you would want for a functioning community. Originally described as the “Ghetto” by the good burghers of the medieval Reichsstadt (imperial town) of Kaufbeuren, it is a well defined district of it, situated on a hill above the town. Originally about 20,000 people from Old Gablonz lived and worked there, but as the years have gone by their numbers have dwindled and other ethnic Germans, mainly emigrees from the former Soviet Union, have moved in.

Neugablonz- an example of the post-war German Economic Miracle

To put the success of Neugablonz industries into the wider context of the “German Wirtschaftswunder” participants’ later economic prosperity was the result of their industriousness as well as certain key political decisions in respect of post-war Germany. After the Marshall Plan¹³ had provided initial funds for the reconstruction of Germany, the currency reform of 1948 was the first step towards a free-market economy after the abolition of war based monetary control and rationing. Economic measures taken from 1952 onwards by Konrad Adenauer¹⁴ delivered financial normality to those who had lost everything.

Very important in this respect was the introduction of legislation of the so-called “Lastenausgleich” (sharing the burden) which compensated people for losses suffered as a result of war-time damage or expropriation. As analysed by Michael L. Hughes (1999, pp.185-216) a tax was levied on those who had been able to keep considerable assets; this could be paid quarterly over 30 years. The main benefits were compensation for the loss of savings and investments, property, firms and factories. But, as respondents testified, in many cases it

¹³ The Marshall Plan, officially called the European Recovery Program, ERP (1948-1952), was an initiative by America to rebuild Europe after the war.

¹⁴ Konrad Adenauer was Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany from 1949 to 1963.

proved impossible to prove previous ownership in the old homeland as relevant documents were lost or unavailable from the Czech Communist authorities. Also low interest credits became available helping to start a new life and to re-build a functioning household with finance being made available for furniture, kitchen equipment etc. Preferential treatment and subsidies were given to refugees and expellees in the renting sector and municipal housing. Favourable terms for credits for self-builders were being offered and taken up en masse.

This stimulated the growth of the German economy as all the products needed had to be manufactured, which led to an explosion of industry, the so-called "German Wirtschaftswunder" (economic miracle) of the 1950s. It was one of the achievements of the early Federal Republic which included a social-market economy, a stable and democratic political system, and the integration of millions of uprooted and impoverished Germans.

.....

As far as Neugablonz is concerned, since peaking in the 1950s and 60s, the jewellery production has gradually shrunk, mainly because of competition from the Far East. The older generation had taken retirement without younger family members taking up the challenges their forebears coped with so efficiently. Many had witnessed difficult times, all had lived with the older generations' stories of great hardship, immense effort and sacrifices and turned to other training and employment opportunities instead. To date there are about 100 companies left in and around Neugablonz, a number having made the transition from jewellery production into other industrial sectors, where specialist glass products and precision engineering for a variety of components are required (Bundesverband der Gablonzer Industrie e.V., 2012).

Institutions in Neugablonz reminding us of the origins of the town include: The Industrial Museum and Iser-Gebirgsmuseum (the Iser Mountains' Museum), das Haus der Industrie (The House of Industry) and the well-regarded training establishment, die Berufsfachschule fuer Glas und Schmuck (The Professional College for Glass and Jewellery), where all the traditional techniques as well as new ones are taught, mainly to students from outside the region.

Conclusion

Chapter 5 traced the history of the town and district of Gablonz and its beginnings from small beginnings in Northern Bohemia to considerable success by becoming the centre of a population which collectively became experts in producing exquisite paste jewellery. Very important in this success story was the role of the Jews who developed a thriving business and marketing sector, complementing the skills and artistry of the workers in what became known as Gablonz industries. Though Germans locally outnumbered Czechs and Jews, all three ethnic groups played their part in making Gablonz into a town which became globally famous as the

world's metropolis of fashion jewellery while still part of the Habsburg Empire. As to national identity, whether Czech, German or Jewish, it appears that Gablonz people tended to define their identities by their specific function within the industrial structure, their knowledge and skills.

The key to recognise what it was that made this phenomenal success story possible, is to understand the special mind-set of the people of Gablonz, which developed from the cooperative work practices essential in the production of Gablonz wares. The completion of final products was always dependent on the skills and efforts of several artisans, each knowledgeable in one or more of the different production techniques needed to produce a perfect end-product. Integrated working methods such as group production and work chains were based on cooperation and trust which encouraged close personal relations between work colleagues and each others' family networks. This bridged the gap between work and leisure as people would be known to one another as friends and acquaintances not just at work but within the wider community. Over time the population had become more like a big multi-branched family rather than just a collection of artisans, shopkeepers, and members of all the other professions normally found in towns.. Differences in nationality or political outlook did not appear to affect the ethnically mixed working environment or inter-communal behaviour, a fact which is also confirmed by the German and Czech respondents, and particularly stressed by the local Czech historian who took part in the study.

With all the characteristics of social capital present as referred to by Putnam, such as community cohesion, sociability, civic engagement, solidarity, trust and cooperation Gablonz folk were able to make the transition from the disaster of the expulsions to a tolerable life in post-war Neugablonz in Germany. The old all-embracing cooperative community spirit including all the elements of social capital could not be destroyed by the harsh fate they suffered. In the end their personal qualities and professionalism, as well as an identity with built in strength and resilience had made personal, professional and commercial success again possible in Neugablonz.

The expellees had acted almost as a collective, united in pursuing shared goals, industrially and commercially, a willingness to help, work for and with one another and protect joint interests vital to all. The result was a certain commercial and private exclusivity of Gablonzers and later Neu-Gablonzers, which was always remarked upon at trade exhibitions, and is referred to even now.

The working and social traditions which had shaped the mind-sets of old Gablonzers proved to have been a life-line for them after their expulsion and a significant factor in helping to create a future for their families in post-war Germany. Their success-story and resilience demonstrated after 1945 is explored in Part 2 through the testimony of their children It is considered amazing to the present day and made it an interesting subject worthy of in-depth research.

Part 2

The Memory Study - War Child Research

Remembering History

Research Strand 1: History as experienced by sixteen German Research Participants,
born 1933-1940 in Gabonz, Jablonec nad Nisou

and

The Human Dimension

Research Strand 2: The Effects of Sudeten History as experienced by Research
Participants before, during and after their expulsion in 1945/1946

.....

Chapter 6

Remembering History

*Memories and perspectives of Sudeten German respondents and their families on
History and Politics following the timeline and thematic links with Part 1 as a way of
combinig both disciplines, History and the Social Sciences.*

6.1 Introduction - Research Participants

Research for this section, Part 2 of the inter-disciplinary study, is from now on conducted *according to the principles of the Social Sciences*. Research methods for data collection in social research differ from those in history by allowing, even encouraging, a personalised approach where the researcher is expected to question, understand and comment on his/her own function and reactions in the inter-relationship with respondents. This has to be borne in mind when the concept of critical distance is under scrutiny.

Social researchers know that the closer the initial basis for understanding, the greater respondents' willingness to cooperate, and the more natural and honest the answers will be. The less social and cultural distance, difference in age and educational background, the better and more trustworthy respondents answers will turn out. All these pre-conditions between researcher and the German respondents were fulfilled here. A common basis of Central European cultural was also present with the Czech respondents. Regarding the interview conversation and its function as a research tool, the traditional view as shown by Holstein and

Gubrium, 2003, (p. 141) is taken here in that it is simply a conduit for transporting information rather than an unreliable construct. However one must never lose sight of bias, which is inherent in any human communication as well as being present through the selectivity of questions as pointed out by Monette, Sullivan, and DeJong (2014, p.181, p. 247) and others. As in all social research, the perspective of the Sudeten German respondents, the result of their background and experiences is fully acknowledged.

Transparency is maintained as all answers to questions in the questionnaires are fully reproduced in English from German and Czech, and can be viewed on request. Electronic copies of respondents' scripts can be made available at any time. *Anonymity and Privacy* are prerequisites in a study such as this and an undertaking in this respect was required by the Ethics Committee which has been complied with throughout. Because participants' individual profiles could easily be recognised by their community, the four Questionnaires filled in by each core-respondent, are marked by an ID code which is referred to whenever sections of their testimonies are used in the following chapters.

					15F39	
				8F38	14F39	
				4F38	7F39	
		3F35		9M38	13M39	6F40
16M33	10M34	12F35	2M36	5M38	11M39	1F40
1933	1934	1935	1936	1938	1939	1940
1	1	2	1	4	5	2

1F40 2M36 3F35 4F38 5M38 6F40 7F39 8F38 9M38 10M34 11M39 12F35 13M39 14F39
15F39 16M33

Figure 11 Gender and Age Distribution of the Core- group of Research Participants

Name Codes are always quoted whenever sections of testimonies are used, for example:5M38 1st digit – Number on alphabetical list of names, only known to the author, Letter– M/F, male/female (blue/pink). Last two digits - year of birth (19)38 Core-group of 16 respondents: 9 women and 7 men.

6.2 History and the Effects of Displacement - 16 Sudeten German War Children

(referred to as the core-group)

Methodology and research approaches specific to this and the following chapters are demonstrated in the Appendix)

The research tools used were 2 semi-structured questionnaires for written testimonies and a further 2 completed during a standardised interview where the interviewer was free to probe, but allowing the respondent full freedom of expression. All 16 correspondents engaged fully and diligently with their task.

7 life-stations were targeted in chronological order, parallel to the history sections as set out in Part 1 of the study, Chapters 3-5.

Respondents' Life-stations

1. **Pre-1945** - Annexation, War. *First home/school in Gablonz*
2. **End of War** - *Pre-expulsion period*
3. **Expulsion** - *Loss of home and expropriation. Holding camp. Transport*
4. **Arrival in the new host-region** - *Resettlement, new school, temporary home*
5. **New home**
6. **Transitional period** - *Partial integration*
7. **Adult life** - *Full Integration???*

In respect of the history and politics of the inter-war years, the Sudeten crisis and the early years of World War 2, my respondents were mostly too young to have had significant memories to contribute much personal eye-witness material. However, it was also explored what they remembered of their parents' opinions, attitudes and motives for their political choices.

6.3 Research Participants – Background – The Present

The core-group of 16 research participants are now resident in and around Kaufbeuren-Neugablonz in Bavaria. They belong to the last generation still able to contribute first-hand accounts of events in Czechoslovakia during and just after the Second World War. Their witness testimony and comments relate to the now historic times of the German expulsions after 1945.

All were well informed, fit and active individuals. They were living in their own homes, still busy with social activities within their community, taking part in a wide range of sporting and cultural events, such as hiking, skiing, singing in choirs, supporting their church, and helping to organise local festivities, some reminding them of their Bohemian origins. However, as testimonies will

show, below the surface of a fairly comfortable bourgeois existence memories of their childhood and subsequent displacement are a part of them lasting as long as their existence on this earth.

Memory recall of their early and later lives seemed to have posed no problems, though they admitted to having had occasional “emotional” moments while working on the four questionnaires. During conversations, no awkwardness developed at any stage, communication flowed freely and effortlessly without losing focus. All engaged thoroughly and diligently with the task set out in preparatory letters, phone-calls, and during visits to Kaufbeuren-Neugablonz. Overall no ethical difficulties or other problems arose; participants soon realised that the researcher’s understanding of their particular journey through life went well beyond what is generally known.

They had got used to the fact that their story had been more or less buried and their past experiences ignored for well over half a century. For post-war Germany, it seems, the only way forward was to focus on the future rather than the past. To dwell on the fate of millions of its own war victims was uncomfortable and did not seem appropriate in view of the Third Reich’s war-time record. The Cold War historiography projected in the Communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe presented a picture hostile to German war victims while stressing their own victim status. From the testimonies it is obvious that, like other war victims, members of this cohort of German expellees should also be considered as such.

6.4 Memories of Key Stages of History and Politics, 1918-1945

The older generation’s comments of the inter-war years

Along with respondents’ life-histories, it was considered useful to probe the inter-war experiences and attitudes of respondents’ grandparents and parents to gauge the nature of the political climate of these far off days. As shown in Chapter 3 and its Conclusion, key themes here are: how the Germans reacted to being part of Czechoslovakia and their situation vis-a-vis the Czech majority, increasing German nationalism, Henlein and the SdP and the influence of National Socialism before and after the Annexation. How were the identities of respondents’ grandparents and parents affected by the changes in circumstances they had lived through? Can their descendents, former war children and respondents in this study, be expected to shed light on the experiences and reasons for the political choices of preceding generations? Do these historic times have any significance for the German respondents in this study?

It appears respondents grew into adults in modern post-war Germany with new value systems which their parents had also adopted. One looked forward, not back. Respondents’ interest in and knowledge of pre-war days seemed quite limited and patchy. When interviewed about how they understood their parents’ thoughts and actions during the inter-war years the response

was “our parents were busy re-building their lives, they looked forward not back, and did not discuss politics with us”. This may also have been the result of efforts to bury the trauma of expropriation and expulsion which made it necessary to concentrate on something positive, such as facilitating their families’ future.

It is important to understand that the only vivid childhood memories were about what was important to participants as children: life in their old homeland, family, playing, school and most vivid of all the expulsion with all the consequences and how they were affected by it all. However, they were able to provide information on identity issues relating to the two preceding generations.

Identities

As mentioned before, centuries of inter-marriage had produced a very mixed ethnic situation of Czechs, Germans and Jews before Hitler’s divisive race laws. There is anecdotal evidence that in many localities a feeling of national indifference continued to persist among members of the Bohemian and later Czechoslovak population well into modern times. Trying to understand identity issues in the older generation we have to return once again to the times before and after 1918 as outlined in Chapter 3. The testimonies of the German respondents stress their grandparents’ fond memories of their times during the years of the Habsburg Empire while also confirming their Austrian identity (3F35; 5M38; 6F40; 7F39; 9M38; 13M39; 15F39; 16M33). In the testimonies the shift in the 1930s of the majority of Sudeten Germans towards the nationalist policies of Konrad Henlein comes across as a defensive patriotic reaction in respect of their German Bohemian homeland, as they perceived their culture and their rights to be under threat from “czechfication”.

The strict and binding directives of the Ethics Committee of the University of Reading and the Institute of Education were a limiting factor in respect of probing families’ political orientation in the 1930s and 1940s, as intrusive questions on personal or other sensitive issues are not permitted. Therefore it was difficult to directly pursue lines of inquiry such as party allegiances, involvement with the SdP or later Nazi Party membership. One indicator was mentioned by Gebel who wrote that after the Annexation and the dissolution of the SdP less than half of its former Sudeten German members subsequently opted for the NSDAP (Gebel, 1999, p. 129). Political matters in pre-war Czechoslovakia seemed to have been outside the experience and mind-set of the former German children on account of their lack of maturity. Only sketchy feedback transpired even after a second attempt to gain more information. The answers of 6 additional Czechs which were eventually sourced, also children at the time, were only able to fill gaps which covered the time after the Annexation till 1945.

IDENTITY →	Austrian Bohemian Altoesterreicher	German Bohemian Deutschboehmen	German- Czech	German-Deutsch Sudetendeutsch? Pan- German? Pro-Nazi?
Grandparents’ generation Born in the 1880s	8 (50%) felt as above 3F35, 5M38, 6F40, 7F39, 9M38, 13M39, 15F39, 16M33	2 felt as above 14F39, 11M39		2 8F38, 12F35
Parents Born pre 1914.	1 7F39	3 6F40,14F39, 15F39		11 (69%) F40, 3F35, 4F38, 5M38, 8F38,9M38,10M34,11M39, 12F35, 13M39,16M33

Figure 12 Identities of Grandparents and Parents according to Respondents

All the families lived in the predominately German district of Gablonz where Czechs were a minority of approximately 16%. However, it turned out that half, i.e. 8 out of 16 in the core group of participants had mixed ancestry and Czech family members in the past. Two more, who had no knowledge in this respect, have Slavic names.

50% of the core-group described their grandparents as committed “Altoesterreicher” (Austrians of the Old Empire), not specifically German or Czech. In the parents’ inter-war generation knowledge of mixed ancestry was still present but no mixed marriages were mentioned as far as their cohort was concerned. The table on identities shows how the gradient shifted from the grandparents being mainly Austrian Bohemian to an identity in the parents’ generation just described as “Deutsch” (69%).

Only one parent still felt Austrian Bohemian; three were described as German Bohemian, “Deutschboehmen”, a term from Imperial times, differentiating between them and Czech Bohemians, while the majority (11) felt “Deutsch”. During interviews that to them as to their descendants meant Sudetendeutsch/German Bohemian (Deutsch Boehmen) which is how respondents still describe their nationality today. As mentioned before, it was not possible on ethical grounds to ascertain to what degree the pan-German “Nazi” element influenced the German Gablonzers when 16,789 of them voted for Henlein’s party in the elections of 1935 and 18,377 in 1938. To what extent they were believers in the underlying Nazi ideology or just felt

strongly locally patriotic as Northern Bohemian German-speakers who wanted Sudetenland to be independent from Czechoslovakia can not be ascertained in retrospect. The researcher got the distinct impression through informal communication that respondents' German parents primarily looked to Henlein for a Sudeten German solution for the Bohemian borderlands rather than supporting Hitler in his overall Pan-German aims. As referred to before, the self-contained work and community orientated mentality of the Gablonzers was partly conditioned by their somewhat provincial and isolated country location in the Bohemian mountains; it was in the large cities of the Reich where the majority of Hitler's supporters could be found. In the author's opinion it might be wrong to search for lasting identity changes following political mile-stones in a chronological linear sequence, from Imperial Austrian German via Sudeten German to Pan-German and Nazi. In the general population the choices were probably dependent on the political climate of the day, but depending on age, in different combinations at different times.

Post-war family identities were shaped by fully embracing a value system different from National Socialism. Living in democratic Germany they felt German, but of Bohemian origin. It was observed when interacting with respondents that traces of Austrian identity in contrast to what is called a "Reichsdeutsch" one are still noticeable, even today. It is present most prominently linguistically, in their use of Bohemian German, a branch of Austrian German. Respondents still displayed certain Viennese behavioural features from Imperial times in their slightly courtly manners. Some Neugablonzers watch Austrian TV for preference and are still aware of their affinity to Austrian culture and approach to life. The uncle of one respondent always rejoiced when visiting Austria, calling the country his home. Sudeten Germans never did subscribe to what is called the "Prussian" attitudes of Reich Germans, something which often caused frictions during Third Reich times. As "Altoesterreicher", Bohemians used and still use many words not found in High-German, a vocabulary profoundly influenced by all the languages in use during Imperial times (7F39; 1/5).

6.5 References to Inter-war Grievances

Personal memories and opinions as seen through the lens of the former Sudeten German war-children. Memories of grandparents' and parents' Comments

Answers in the following sections relate directly to the time line for History and Politics after 1918 in Part 1. However, they now mainly reflect individual memories and perspectives about respondents' families' comments rather than their own memories as eye-witnesses as respondents were pre-school children at the time. However, their answers, remembered from the older generation's comments, should go some way towards highlighting the main sources of disappointment with the Prague Government.

Below is a selection of answers to questions in Questionnaires 1 and 3, which probed opinions on life during the inter-war years from the perspective of the two generations preceding participants. Respondents' testimonies are a reflection on their families's views in respect of the time in question. Four examples of Questionnaires 1-4 with answers can be viewed in the Appendix.

Respondents' memories repeated the main inter-war grievances from a German perspective already outlined in Chapter 3, caused by the pronounced Slav agenda of the Prague Government after 1918. This made them feel like second-class citizens.

Two females, born 1939 and one of the oldest female research participants, born 1935, wrote of their parents' dissatisfaction about the closure of German schools, kindergartens, theatres and libraries in predominantly German areas after 1918. Also mentioned is the fact that many jobs in purely German areas, such as in municipal administration, the railways, postal services, the police and all important offices in state employment were now staffed by Czechs, often not speaking adequate German. This was clearly a major shock to people in German majority areas with traditionally few Czechs, who since Habsburg times had been used to a German or bi-lingual administration. Awareness of job losses and pensions being stopped, interference in business matters as well as high taxes and pressure to give Czechs priority added to the perception of inequality. People in a village near Gablonz were annoyed when the local German policeman was replaced by a Czech. German officials were transferred against their wishes into Czech areas where their children would have to attend Czech schools. However, many Germans did learn Czech, one grandma spent 8 years in Czech schools and carried on interacting with Czech friends. Continuing German-Czech social contacts were also mentioned in several other testimonies pointing to a seemingly non-national behaviour.

After a time of high unemployment and poverty because of the increasing downturn in industrial output during the 1930s the father of 12F35, Oswald Wondrak, was appointed Mayor of Gablonz in 1938. Said to have been voted for by Czechs as well as Germans, he managed to reverse the debt situation which had plagued the Gablonz municipality¹⁵. Many people agreed with the SdP, when it railed against the bulk of German tax revenue, the result of their industries, being used by the Czech government to facilitate what they viewed as anti-German policies. How many family members of respondents had joined the SdP could not be ascertained (see Ethics directives), but testimonies show that though a number of families were not active in the party they felt German and spoke only German.

Mayor Wondrak, though previously a Liberal, had joined Konrad Henlein's SdP and helped with the movement. He had observed that Beneš's promises were never kept and Germans were

¹⁵ A very able man, he became mayor of Kaufbeuren-Neugablonz post-war, an office he held for many years.

increasingly restricted. His action was just one example of how voters deserted other parties for Henlein's SdP, to present a united front out of frustration with President Beneš's continuing tactics of procrastination (7F39); (12F35); (13M39); (15F39) 1/2; 1/5; 3/a, b, c,d, f i, j).

In the literature one also comes across a recurring theme of deliberate irritations of Germans by some Czechs, albeit anecdotally, as well as heckling and even abuse in day to day affairs (Wiskemann 1967, p.118). This, however, was not experienced as far as respondents' families were concerned. Wiskemann also refers to a certain amount of triumphalism and bad behaviour after 1918 displayed rather unwisely by the new "Staatsvolk" (state-bearing people). One male participant drew attention to his father's unpleasant experiences, while undergoing compulsory military training in the Czechoslovak armed forces. He refused to describe them but also knew of another German who committed suicide while serving with the Czech military between the wars (11M39, 3/ a-j).

1F40-2M36-3F35-4F38-5M38-6F40-7F39-8F38-9M38-10M34-11M39-12F35-13M39-14F39-15F39-16M33 6

6.6 Konrad Henlein

Only the three eldest German respondents of the core-group, 16M33, 10M34, 12F35, could be expected to have had any memories of the Annexation; they were 5, 4 and 3 in 1938. Though Cowan (1997, p.148) found even children as young as three years capable of accurate memory retention if it was of personal significance, these excerpts can only be regarded as containing memories of listening to the adults then and later.

In respect of the 30s one male respondent pointed to the low number of Czechs who lived in Gablonz pre-1945. They had come to work, had learnt German and were totally integrated, though there were pubs purely for Czechs (13M39; 1/2). Another respondent, whose family ran a jewellery business where Czechs were also employed, did not remember his parents ever mentioning inter-ethnic trouble (11M39; 1/3). Another female participant wrote that some aunts were at school with Czechs and had social contacts with them. According to her testimony there was no discrimination, one lived peacefully and got along well with the Czechs of Gablonz, even at the time of being part of the Reich (7F39, 1/3). One of the older respondents writes that his father grew up with an aunt and her Czech partner in a house high up in the mountains. He continued visiting them until well into the 1960s (10M34;1/1).

However, differences in national outlook transpired from another testimony. The parents of 5M38's Czech grandmother had objected to her marriage to his German grandfather, and chased the couple away from the farm with dogs. On the other hand all sisters of his German

grandmother had married Czechs. As a child he spent a lot of time with his Czech relations and remembers a very cordial atmosphere in the mixed extended family. During the war all members of his family looked after one another. At the time of the expulsions, when he was 8 years old, he stayed with his Czech grandma who wanted to keep him by pretending he was Czech, intending to dye his blond hair black. He emphasised his pride in his Czech ancestry (5M38; 1/1).

In respect of the nature of the coexistence between Czechs and Germans nobody in the core-group seemed to have experienced any unpleasantness personally or remembered parents speaking ill of the Czechs.

Konrad Henlein. The core-group rarely referred to him. Even when asked repeatedly on different occasions, they seemed to be genuinely ignorant of his political significance and did not refer to unpleasant goings-on while they lived in Gablonz. They learned more from the author than vice-versa.

One participant (9M38) wrote, that Henlein was perceived as apolitical by many of the older generation, not a German fanatic; after all his mother was Czech, so presumably his mother tongue was also Czech. To them Henlein was better known through his involvement with the Turnerbewegung (German Gymnastics Movement) than as a politician and leader of the Sudetendeutsche Partei. The Turnverein (Gymnastics movement) was described by two respondents who wrote that it was usual for Germans to socialise within their own associations seeking to retain their language and culture, and also liked to keep fit and healthy and enjoyed competitions. Also mentioned was that people liked to wear Tracht (traditional Austrian clothing, at the time a sign of pride in their identity), which Czechs did not. (15F39; 1/3). Only one person in the core-group wrote that her parents were not attracted to Henlein and his movement. (3F35); they too got on well with Czechs.

As far as *Konrad Henlein* is concerned the additional German testimonies from the Schwaebisch-Gmuend group are also sketchy and non-judgemental. In the testimonies of those participants, who were older, Henlein comes across as a German Bohemian/Sudeten patriot, a decent man who saw striving for excellence through physical training as the basis for reaching high levels of intellectual and moral qualities. In their view he did try to reach an honest settlement with the Czech regime for a federal solution for Sudetenland but was continuously stone-walled. They considered the Hitler connection poisonous.

1F40-2M36-3F35-4F38-5M38- 6F40-7F39-8F38-9M38-10M34-11M39-12F35-13M39-14F39-15F39-16M33 4

Czech testimonies analysed in later sections supplied some examples of their experiences of Henlein's movement.

Vierke (2006, p. 493) mentions interviewing an ex-Gablonz research participant in 2002 who said almost all Germans were pro-Henlein and the Annexation which is confirmed by the election results of 1935 and 1938, previously referred to. He continued that it was clear to them that the Czechs as well as the Reich Germans would ultimately be their nemesis, but they regarded the latter as the lesser evil. What they really wanted was to be part of Austria. After only 20 years under Czech rule their identity in 1938 was still rooted more deeply in Austria than in Germany. Zimmermann (1999, p.116, fn. 259) quotes from a report (Deutschland-Berichte, January 1939) which states that the prevailing mood in Sudetenland was, “...we have got rid of the Czechs without war, now crammed into the machinery of Greater Germany, we must howl with the wolves.”, in other words, to make the best of things. He comments on the same page that it is improbable that the majority of the Sudeten Germans expressly supported National Socialist ideology with its race theories etc., but approved of having gained their independence and believed in the economic recovery promised.

There was relief that at long last it was possible to be German without Czech directives and restraints. Generally people were pleased not to be second-class citizens any more, something frequently referred to by German respondents. However, after the Bohemian Germans' initial joy and jubilation, the realisation soon dawned of having exchanged domination by a Czech ethnic majority for Hitler's dictatorship, soon to be followed by war. Before the outbreak of war the political changes had created optimism, as there was hope for a revival of the Bohemian economy. Life did not change much and neither did the relationship with the Czechs in the area. No particular events were reported after the Annexation, once the Wehrmacht had crossed the border (16M33).

The street-scene had been festive in all the German areas, public spaces were filled with placards, flags and banners, bands played and parades were taking place. Hitler pictures adorned public buildings and class-rooms. One woman (12F35) wrote that according to her mother, “The enthusiasm lasted just for three days”. Later on her father was not very thrilled with Reich attitudes. Berlin had not been very happy about him having been elected as Mayor in 1938. Because of her father's criticism of nepotism and favouritism within local Nazi ranks he was later disciplined by the Nazi authorities in Reichenberg, sent to the front in 1944 and replaced by a “Reich German”¹⁶ sent from Berlin.

That Sudeten Germans celebrated the take-over by the Reich is well known, but this did not happen everywhere. One male respondent heard about the jubilation of the population, but it did not take place in his home area. His own parents had welcomed the annexation but though his Czech relations seemed ill at ease and embarrassed at first, they always supported the

¹⁶ The description of a person sent to Sudetenland from pre-1938 Germany to take over duties ensuring Reich directives were implemented.

German part of the family in the following years. He has no memories of skirmishes or violence, apart from an atmosphere of unease sometimes observed with Czechs. His German grandma kept referring to Masaryk as having been a good man repeating “The Third Reich will pass like a mirage”. The notion of “Reichsdeutsch” left a negative impression on him. As a result of personal circumstances he recently moved to Linz in Austria and finds the atmosphere there close to what he remembers of old Gablonz. (5M38).

Three respondents mentioned incidents in respect of Jewish property, two remembered the Gablonz synagogue burning (9 November 1938) and that some windows had been smashed (16M33, 12F35, 8F38). This adds to what the journalist Jonathan Griffin reported from other Sudeten areas in 1938 (Chapter 3). In the testimony from the Schwaebisch Gmuend group it transpires that no Gablonz people were prepared to damage the synagogue, therefore outsiders had to be brought in to burn the “Temple”, much to the disgust of many locals. Members of both groups said they had had Jewish friends at school and their families had business and personal connections with Jewish families. It appears, judging by later comments, that the full knowledge about how the Nazis dealt with their “Jewish problem” was only acquired post-war at school and from the media. Their reaction to that information was one of dismay (5M39). People had no idea about the persecution of Jews, they were believed to have emigrated, which in the case of Gablonz was largely the case.

Several respondents had referred to the fact that Reich Germans became dominant after the Annexation and were not very popular. All the same everything seemed positive, businesses went well, and even more Czechs were employed. Parents never mentioned trouble, and still got on well with the Czechs.

After the annexation men and women were expected to join the Nazi party, but many avoided being active members. One father did not join and was not pressured any further. Only two respondents volunteered the information that their fathers were Nazis after the Annexation, one who had mixed Czech German roots, while another one joined the party opportunistically because he wanted to be included in the German Olympic shooting squad, having competed for Czechoslovakia before the German occupation. One was too young to see differences between the nationalities, the Czechs seemed integrated and behaved unobtrusively (13M39).

1F40-2M36-3F35-4F38-5M38- 6F40-7F39-8F38-9M38-10M34-11M39-12F35-13M39-14F39-15F39-16M33 10

6.7 The time of the Annexation in Gablonz

As previously described, the time before the Annexation was a period of unrest and violent skirmishes in many areas of Sudetenland, though no references to such incidents in Gablonz were part of German or Czech testimonies. It is noteworthy that after the Czech Government's declaration of martial law on 13 September 1938, Gablonz was the only town not included in this measure. This fact points to a high level of civic peace which the municipal administration firmly strove to maintain before and at the time of the Annexation. According to the memoirs of the last German Mayor of Gablonz (1938-44), it was a very high priority for the leaders of the administration to maintain law and order at a time of political unrest elsewhere. As a result of official posters and public announcements asking people to refrain from congregating in public places or indulge in unacceptable behaviour against fellow citizens, no episodes of aggression occurred. The property of those Czechs who left in a hurry was officially secured and returned to them when claimed (Simon, 2003, pp. 33-38).

As mentioned, even after a second attempt to elicit more information on Henlein and the activities of members of his movement, repeated scrutiny of the German testimonies of the core-group from Neugablonz and those from Schwaebisch Gmuend did not reveal any new information. Those who were younger children at the time in question genuinely did not even know the name, and asked who he was. Some older ones recognised the name but had no idea of his function or political influence. Only the Czechs made some comments, quoted in the next section, but not enough to build up a complete picture as to how Gablonz was affected.

An example of Czech difficulties joining in German community activities before 1938 was provided in a German testimony. An uncle of one Schwaebisch-Gmuend respondent was the commander of the fire brigade in Labau, a purely German village. He suggested a joint festivity with the neighbouring Czech fire brigade whose commander was a friend. The Czech friend agreed but later had to decline on orders from up high and apologised. During the early 1930s he also remembers a German folk festival being interrupted by Czech police who were always present on such occasions. The song "Die Wacht am Rhein" (Guards on the Rhine) was played which was perceived as patriotic by the Germans but nationalistic by the Czechs and therefore forbidden. The conductor was arrested, hauled before a court and ended up having to pay a very high fine. He also relates another incident when one of the Czech Sokol associations marched through Labau shouting in unison that the Czechs were in charge, displaying their antipathy against the Germans living there. Generally the Germans felt increasingly restricted which seemed to have focused their determination even more in a nationalist direction.

Respondents of the core-group as well as the additional German volunteers from Schwaebisch Gmuend wrote quite independently that according to their families' comments and their own

observations, Czech-German relations in their area of Gablonz appeared normal before and after the Annexation. One Schwaebisch Gmuend participant, who was 9 at the time of the Annexation, remembers no skirmishes, demonstrations or anything similar, though he lived in Marschowitz next to a Czech area. There Czechs had adapted to the new situation, lived quietly and unobtrusively but socialised separately with their own people.

6.8 The time of the Annexation in Gablonz: Czech Comments

Five contemporaries of the Germans and one born post-war were sourced in early 2013 and volunteered to supply information according to their memories.

1JB (b.1929), 2MC (b.1930), 3JM (b.1938), 4JT (b.1937), 5JT (b.1931), 6LP (b. post-war).

They were able to put the German observations into context with their own circumstances after the Annexation. Their testimonies about life in Gablonz turned out to be valuable in respect of how the Czech community reacted to their change in circumstances.

Jan Bitman, a local Czech historian, born 1929, has provided much of the information in this section. He wrote a book on Morchenstern/ Smržovka near Gablonz, and his knowledge of past events in nearby Gablonz and the district as a whole proved invaluable.

He acknowledges that in spite of some problems in the past, over hundreds of years Czechs and Germans had lived largely peacefully with one another. He and the other Czech contributors blamed the problems in Sudetenland on Henlein and his movement without questioning why this had happened. However, his testimony about the ethnic co-existence in the Gablonz area was not very different from that of the Germans, as he too writes that even after the Annexation people remained peaceful and calm. Though there were events where Germans, young and old, would attend in large numbers at rallies in support of Henlein, they did not cause trouble. Some Czech respondents, youngsters at the time, also joined the crowds at Henlein rallies as they were curious to see what went on. As mentioned before, at the time of the Annexation and before the local authority of Gablonz, town and District, had been very effective in keeping public behaviour under control.

Only one Czech respondent reported details of Czech distress at the time of the Annexation 2MC remembers hearing Sudeten Germans cheering on the border near her village in a Czech part outside the area of Gablonz. They celebrated with swastika flags, while the Czechs cried.

However, according to Bitman (1JB) neighbours of different nationalities still got along well. There were no real signs of unrest or hate in the Gablonz area, and there were no fatalities in 1938 among Czechs caused by Germans fanatics, whereas one German became the victim of a Czech attacker from outside the region. Czechs having become part of the Reich after the

Annexation were able to make their own decisions in respect of nationality without being pressured (1JB). But if one had opted for German nationality the decision was irrevocable. In 1945 this would make them guilty of treason when the Beneš decrees became law.

For the Czechs of Sudetenland, now being part of the Reich, but very much a minority, the most sensible way of coping with the situation was to remain calm. One Czech respondent wrote their house was searched and his father briefly arrested, suspected of anti-German activities (3JM). 5JT writes about Henlein and Hitler fanatics who made life difficult for Czechs in the trades but did not specify his comments further. His Grandpa, a communist was held for a while but later released. According to 1JB Czech and German neighbours lived quietly with and alongside one another, but there were underlying tensions and the Czechs knew how to avoid trouble by not discussing politics with Germans, even friends. Czechs continued to run their shops and pursue their trades, though they perceived certain Reich regulations as discriminatory. Though Germans were dominant the Czechs did not feel threatened (5JT)

The local Czech historian also commented in respect of Henlein's attitude and that of the SdP in respect of the Jews. Henlein appeared to be quite uninterested in the issue and in his opinion only fell into line with Reich attitudes out of gratitude for the liberation of Sudetenland by Hitler. Both German groups referred to mixed marriages between Czechs and Germans continuing up to 1945 which is also confirmed by the the Czech local historian and Czech respondents. It appears that the local German authorities in the Gablonz region did not make things difficult in this respect. Unlike marriages between Germans and Jews, those between Czechs and Germans were not forbidden, even after 1938, but required the permission of the Office for Race and Settlement (Rasse- und Siedlungshauptamt) (Greiter, 2014, p. 254). It appears the ethnic situation remained fluid, even throughout the war. As many half-Czechs with Czech mothers had German names (7F39, 1/2), the nationality of fellow pupils at school was not obvious.

Lukáš Pleticha of Jablonec, a lawyer elected to the Czech Parliament in 2013 also commented, as he had always been very interested in the subject of Czechs and Germans in his town. His testimony was interesting even though strictly speaking he was not one of the Czech respondents on account of age. He had talked to Czechs of the older generation with roots in Gablonz/Jablonec and confirmed that as far as possible Czechs carried on as normal while part of the Reich. But he pointed out that the situation varied from locality to locality.

Several respondents mentioned that after the Annexation many Czechs left immediately for the Czech interior from where they had come as new settlers 20 years earlier. They were not locals but Czechoslovak state employees in education, the railways, postal services, police, customs and excise etc. who had been sent to the borderlands post-1918. Many Czech and German Communists, Social Democrats and anti-Faschists were immediately arrested. But, as stressed by the local Czech historian (1JB), these were Gestapo measures not those of the local

Gablonz administration. According to the Meissner Chronic (Meissner Chronicle, up to 1945), it appears that only a few were subsequently sent to work camps in Germany, the rest were released.

According to one Czech respondent the political change made the Czechs suddenly feel like foreigners but did not create significant problems for them locally as long as they did not openly show any opposition to the new political order. However, 5JT writes that after the Annexation some local Germans did not want to communicate in Czech, not even in the German Gablonz dialect but only in High German. He remembers a German shop not serving people if they spoke inadequate German. However, another family of shopkeepers were decent people, always showed respect to everybody and were ready to attend to customers, irrespective of whether they were Czechs or Germans. In the end they too were deported (5JT). According to the great aunt of one Czech contact, relations with Germans were good before their support for Henlein and thereafter for Hitler, even though some Germans conducted themselves in an overbearing manner, in her words, like “asses”. No doubt some people were swept up in the feeling of many Sudeten Germans that the injustices after 1918, as they saw it, were finally expunged and justice had been done (Suppan, 2014).

Though they spoke German in public, Czechs were able to send their children to the Czech school in Gablonz which was maintained throughout the war (2MC, 4JT and 5JT). 4JT and 5JT both steadfastly continued to attend the Czech school, the only one in the district. It did not close because the local Czech teachers did not leave in 1938. Both respondents wrote about fights and trading insults with German boys who would sometimes threaten and knock them about on the way home from the Czech school. 5JT would often arrive at home with his shirt ripped, much to the distress of his mother. But he did have a German friend who taught him German but when he went to look for him he and his family had been expelled. He also witnessed the final phase of the destruction of the Synagogue. Though some fanatics celebrated, other Germans did not seem to agree with what had happened and the Czechs totally condemned it.

Within the wider context of the Czech-German relations in Sudetenland, it appears, there may have been many more examples of peaceful co-existence, especially in rural areas. This is frequently quoted anecdotally and in memoirs of Sudeten Germans who were adults at the time. There are many examples in the literature which point to similarly peaceful inter-action. More research is needed to explore inter-ethnic issues generally and/or in specific locations.

Conclusion

Chapter 6 is the first of six to be of significance within the Social Science remit of Part 2 of the thesis. In it German and Czech participants' testimonies are compared with historical and political events from 1918 to 1938 to find out whether they confirm or differ from the historiography referred to in Chapter 3.

Testimonies demonstrate that, quite soon after the Peace Treaties of Paris, like many Bohemian German speakers, the majority of German respondents as far as they could comment on their grandparents' and parents' views, testified that these perceived the changes in their circumstances as negative. Frequently cited were measures taken by the Prague Government to suppress the German influence in the new country which were considered as anti-German. These policies are not usually under scrutiny in the general historiography about Sudeten issues yet they were the ones which gave the Bohemian what they perceived as justified reasons for their initial complaints. Contrary to the grandparents' experience of life during the Habsburg years, they and participants' parents soon thought of themselves as second-class citizens in spite of the democratic values professed to by the government after the creation of Czechoslovakia. Testimonies point to the older generation's disappointment with their situation after the end of the Habsburg era, and their perceived victim status during the Czechoslovak inter-war democracy. As a result the identity of the former Austrian German Bohemians defensively shifted in a nationalist direction, and coalesced to one known as Sudeten German. As far as the identities of German respondents' grandparents and parents, are concerned, they reflect political developments before and after 1918/1919. The majority of respondents' grandparents were remembered as continuing to have an Austrian-German identity even after 1918. However, the inter-war generation of parents described themselves just as "deutsch" (not Sudeten Deutsch) which should not necessarily be interpreted as having developed a Pan-German or Nazi mind-set. They were "deutsch" in the sense that they were German-speakers rather than Czechs.

The nationalist struggle to protect their people's rights, national identity and culture is interpreted as a reaction against targeted czechification attempts. To the older generation "Munich" and the Annexation appear to have been a desirable solution for their locality only, which for them had little to do with Hitler's Pan-German plans. Respondents are aware that both events resulted in global significance, and that they were subsequently historiographically linked to the chain of events unleashed by Hitler for which Sudeten Germans were often blamed. All respondents view the arrival of Fascism, Dictatorship, Racism, the War and everything connected with it, such as the Holocaust, followed by their own expulsion, as a deeply unfortunate and regrettable outcome of the history and politics of the time. Though they were caught up in it all they make the difference that what they wanted for Sudetenland was not

identical to what Hitler desired. The Bohemian/Sudeten Germans welcomed the Annexation as a solution to their own problems in their own regions.

Though the overwhelming majority of Sudeten Germans voted for Henlein in 1938 this fact should not simply be regarded as a vote for Nazism and Hitler, as portrayed in pre-1989 Czech historiography. The election results in May/June 1938 were a response to Henlein's Karlsbad programme which was a call for German equality with their Czech co-citizens and autonomy for Sudetenland within Czechoslovakia. It did not mention the Annexation and ordinary people would not have been aware of certain arrangements made previously between Henlein and Hitler.

Respondents stressed throughout the study the nationalist struggle of their parents' and grandparents' generation was with the Prague governments not the Czechs as such. They and the generations preceding them even more so, were always aware of their Czech-German ethnic inheritance, with the fluid and mixed ethnic situation of Czechs, Germans and Jews continuing up to 1938. Thereafter, mixed marriages between Czechs and Germans continued to take place, even throughout the war, a sign of national indifference by many, even up to 1945.

The German respondents of Bohemian/Sudeten stock are still aware of their ethnic roots in Sudetenland and to this day point to their different identity from the Germans indigenous to the country of Germany. Both German and Czech testimonies also prove that they got on with one another, whereas the relationship between Gablonz Germans and Reich Germans was often strained. Apart from some youthful skirmishes between Czech and German school boys no obvious signs of Czech-German trouble were reported.

Czech testimonies, including that of the local Czech historian, confirm that the day to day Czech-German inter-action in the town and district of Gablonz remained calm and trouble-free before and after the Annexation. The indigenous Czech minority had adjusted, at least outwardly, to being part of the Reich's population. This may in part have been due to the improved economic conditions, benefitting Gablonz Czechs as much as Germans. However, what mattered most locally was the traditionally close, ethnically largely indifferent relationship within the local community, the result of cooperative work-based traditions. This factor accounted for the continuing peaceful co-existence between the two different nationalities, in spite of the turmoil elsewhere in Sudetenland.

Chapter 7

Memories of the Second World War, its End and the Pre-Expulsion period

7.1 Overview

After the watershed of 1918 the economic situation and the civil wars between the Left and Right in both Germany and Austria had made life seem dire and hopeless for ordinary citizens. High on the list of grievances were the losses of those regions to Poland and Czechoslovakia where Germans had historically been the majority populations. Promising solutions gave Adolf Hitler the opportunity to intervene on the side of the Sudeten Germans. They welcomed it, unaware that they had unwittingly encouraged him in his plans which would soon lead to war, just as the economy had started to revive,

Once the war started uncertainty lay ahead. The Czechs of Gablonz kept their heads down as initially members of the SdP and Nazi supporters far outnumbered them. Jan Bitman provides interesting information on the fluidity of political allegiances. Apparently after 1938 quite a number of Czech Social Democrats and Communists, also referred to as Marxists, abandoned their old loyalties and switched sides in favour of the new political scenario.

The general information below is from now on based on respondents' own personal memories, which are more fully explored in subsequent chapters, illustrating the increasingly stressful background to their young lives. All testimonies in this section are in answer to 1/3 1/4 and 1/6 (Questionnaire1, questions 3, 4 and 6).

7.2 The role of propaganda

Once the Second World War started, the population of Northern Bohemia as elsewhere became subject to the full force of Nazi ideology. Respondents remembered flags with swastikas, Hitler pictures and marching bands playing patriotic music. Presenting a united front and believing in Hitler's leadership was expected and constantly re-enforced by Goebbels's all-pervading propaganda machine. German radio broadcasts and loudspeakers in the streets (5M38) at all times echoed the Reich's message. Therefore informed judgements were rarely present among the German-speaking general public; they were certainly not expressed, as one risked being hauled before a court for undermining the war effort, and dissenting voices were quickly silenced. The grandparent generation were less easily seduced by the Reich's propaganda, which is apparent from some of the testimonies. Parents and grandparents had an

idea that there were unpleasant goings-on elsewhere but were not sure about the facts and did not talk about it, fearing to be accused of spreading malicious rumours (14F39; 15F39).

Initially things seemed fairly normal according to the eldest male respondent (10M34); the war was taking place elsewhere and many Germans believed in victory. However, there was also plenty of pessimism among the unknown number of those who were patriotic Bohemians without being Pan-German Nazis.

One female (14F39) stated that nobody in their family believed the war could be won, while according to 11M39 propaganda made everything sound successful and fed optimism, but father's reports during leave painted a different picture and unsettled the family. The few Czechs, who had always lived in the area, had remained calm (16M33) and there were no unpleasant incidences locally. Whatever the circumstances, adults would have to be careful. The daughter of the former Mayor, by now replaced, remembers that prudence was necessary when dealing with the new Reich situation, particularly as they were rather exposed as a high profile family (12F35). However, people felt safe under the Reich, as law and order were rigidly upheld. According to one of the older respondents, passing Roma and door-to-door hawkers were no longer troublesome, and there was no need for a guard dog or to keep a hunting rifle at the ready for protection against thieves (10M34).

1F40-2M36-3F35-4F38-5M38- 6F40-7F39-8F38-9M38-10M34-11M39-12F35-13M39-14F39-15F39-16M33 6

7.3 Family life for the Germans

Once men of fighting age had been called up, mothers and children had to find a way of coping alone, mostly being helped by grandparents and/or the extended family. All but two fathers of respondents were absent during the war. Women were also expected to pull their weight by becoming active members of the Party and be willing to give time to the war effort. For civilians active engagement in official welfare activities such as "Winterhilfe" (Winter Relief) had to be considered a duty. According to a female participant (14F39), her father had joined the NSDAP (Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiter Partei), more for convenience than conviction. When asked to join this clearly did not suit her mother. She flew into a rage and vehemently refused to become a party member, as she and grandparents had to cope with a farm and young children while father was absent. According to one female participant (4F38) her parents were against the Nazi Party. But as her father was an Olympic standard shot and had been a member of the Czech team, he joined the NSDAP because he wanted to carry on with his sport. He was later reprimanded by party headquarters because he allowed French prisoners of war working in his firm to go to the cinema.

As elsewhere, soon the mounting death-toll of serving soldiers became a source of great sorrow for families. One woman reported that her mother, who played the church organ, had never had to play so many requiems, once for three sons from one family (15F39). As the war intensified, family life would be affected by sadness and increasing anxiety about the future. At the same time people were kept in the dark about the true state of affairs on the fronts.

As far as food was concerned, Reich Germans were rumoured to be buying everything up, particularly food and tobacco products (10M34), even though supplies were supposed to be regulated by rationing. However, according to another respondent, it was always possible to get extra supplies when food got scarce after 1941, as a lively black market developed. Czechs from Protectorate farm areas were offering products on the border to Sudetenland. A member of a mixed family stated that his Czech family members looked after them (5M38). It was also known that the Hitler regime made sure that mothers and their families were looked after; “duty girls” also helped. After the end of the war there was starvation, everyone had to try and get by somehow (7F39).

1F40-2M36-3F35-4F38-5M38- 6F40-7F39-8F38-9M38-10M34-11M39-12F35-13M39-14F39-15F39-16M33 6

7.4 NS ideology

This would affect the lives of adults as well as those of the children, but not much memory feedback transpired on the issue as most respondents were pre-school age at the time. The two oldest respondents, 16M33 and 10M34 became members of the “Jungvolk” (young people), part of the Hitler Youth, a boy-scout like organisation which boys had to join at ten. There the meaning of responsibility to “Fuehrer, Volk and Fatherland” was hammered into them. Participant 10M34 reported that the training stood him in good stead, when he and his mother had to cope with the difficulties before, during and after their expulsion.

Another respondent, 5M38, remembered his early school days from September 1944 to February 1945. Boys had a lot of drill practice with an old teacher who would shout a lot. Every morning everyone had to turn to the Fuehrer’s portrait and perform the Hitler salute; written on the wall was: “Mens sana in corpora sano” (a sound mind in a healthy body) and “Praised be what makes one hard.” He vividly remembers military band music and banners with swastikas along his way, first to kindergarten, then to school.

1F40-2M36-3F35-4F38-5M38-6F40-7F39-8F38-9M38-10M34-11M39-12F35-13M39-14F39-15F39-16M33 3

7.5 Gablonz and the War: Czech testimonies

The local Czech historian Jan Bitman (1JB) wrote that on the night of 15 March 1939 the Wehrmacht, coming from Reichenberg/Liberec, marched through Gablonz during a snowstorm. Houses were kept illuminated all night and the soldiers were given tea, food and gifts (1JB).

He tells us that Germans and Czechs in the Gablonz area continued to live and work without friction with and alongside one another throughout the war. This was taking place far beyond the borders of Sudetenland where life had seemed normal before its arrival in the Gablonz region in May 1945.

5JT wrote that Czechs had to blend in during the war years, it would have been impossible to complain or make critical remarks about Hitler, the Gestapo and Security Services would have known immediately and one would have been arrested on the spot. Czechs and Germans went to work every day, children attended school, people went to the cinema, even went dancing. At weekends it was customary to go walking in the surrounding countryside and have a beer in a pub along the way and it did not matter whether one was sitting next to Germans or Czechs (5JT). This mirrors the comments of the historian Petr Koura (2002) in section 3.17 about life under German occupation. Non-national behaviour seems to have been present at a time when it might not have been expected. 5JT also mentioned mixed marriages continuing with the choice of nationality being optional and writes that Germans who had not opted for German nationality were mostly allowed to remain in the country.

Living in Gablonz 5JT writes that his German friend's father was a Communist and sent to a concentration camp from which he did not return. His own grandfather, also a Communist, was arrested but later released, probably because as a carpenter he was needed for work. 5JT's German friend had to join the Hitler Youth, wore a uniform, carried a short dagger in his belt, attended political instruction and took part in marches. It ended their friendship. Reich measures such as executions, random acts of suppression or cruelty by the German authorities, as happened in the Protectorate, are not reported for the District of Gablonz.

Only one female respondent, 2MC, spoke of fear. She was the only one who lived outside Gablonz within the Protectorate, 8 km from Gablonz, inside a Czech area. However, her brother continued to go to school in Gablonz, and in spite of having to cross the border to the Sudetengau daily, he never referred to any problems in the town. After her village had become part of the Protectorate she became very much aware of living under a dictatorship. She remembers people being hungry and constantly living in fear of having things taken away or being arrested, e.g. for listening to foreign broadcasts. Young people of different nationalities from a nearby labour camp used to beg for food every Sunday when they were allowed out. She also writes about young Czech men and women, only 20 years old, being drafted for work

in the Reich. Her family wholeheartedly welcomed the end of the war and the defeat of the Germans.

7.6 The end of the war

The war years passed relatively normally for the German respondents, until its very end. The German children were not really aware of the seriousness of their situation, apart from missing their absent fathers and subconsciously registering their families' growing worries. Those memories are important as far as the former children's own lives are concerned and therefore relevant to the war child study, the Social Science part of this research. They may, however, not offer the insight expected from adults. As they are no longer around to answer questions, the childrens' comments are the closest we can get in this respect.

One of the eldest boys (10M34), eleven years old in 1945, writes about the winter of 1944-45 when whole communities, tens of thousands of Germans from further east, were on the move, fleeing the advance of the Red Army. He watched endless columns of shabby, miserable looking refugees with prams, horse-drawn carts and on foot trudging along the road past their house. It was then that he saw a mother, carrying her toddler who had frozen to death, and absolutely refused to part with her dead child, an experience he never forgot. Before then, in the Jungvolk, he enjoyed playing "Red Indians" and "War" but since then has not touched a weapon, and became a pacifist. He also watched columns of the "Hilfsarmee", unarmed army support units, who also trekked by on foot and wanted to reach "The West". One man was very frightened of the future and 10M34 accompanied him for a while through the woods.

Another participant also writes about the thousands of people from further East including from the Baltic regions fleeing from the Russians in an enormous migration rolling through Northern Bohemia. He remembers Latvian refugees with horses and carts moving through his village at the beginning of 1945. His grandmother accommodated a woman and child but they were all terrified of the Russian advance and soon moved on (9M38).

One respondent, a boy, seven years old, soon found out it was best not to ask too many questions, but once asked his father, a soldier with the Alpine troops, during his last leave, "when will the war be over", he said "we are fighting against the whole world ...". This worried him particularly as he also noticed how the overall atmosphere around him had become tense. People expected the promised "wonder weapon" would do the impossible. He remembered a lot of police in the streets in 1945, constant siren alarm because of enemy aircraft overhead and the dreadfully loud, screaming voices of Hitler and Goebbels coming through loudspeakers. His grandfather just kept shaking his head and his grandmother kept repeating, "all this will be over like a mirage" (5M38).

Once the Russian guns could be heard locally most people realised the war was over. One hoped there would at least be a new beginning (12F35; 5M38). When Hitler's death was announced, in one area every shop window had a placard in the window which read, "he lived, fought and died for us". School was suspended and people anxiously listened to the German news (9M38).

1F40-2M36-3F35-4F38-5M38- 6F40-7F39-8F38-9M38-10M34-11M39-12F35-13M39-14F39-15F39-16M33 4

After the German High Command had ceased broadcasting by 3 May 1945 (Cornwall, 2007, p.142) it was becoming obvious that Germany had lost the war. Respondents' feedback on the older generation's mind-set at this stage was only expressed in broad general terms, such as insecurities and worries about the real state of affairs affecting their families. An additional source, the Meissner Chronik (p.211) tells us of the deep unhappiness of the German people in the Gablonz area and their visible state of agitation. Cornwall's analysis of Ewald Mayer's down-cast mood and confusion at the end of the war in Reichenberg, expressed in his diary, allows a glimpse into the reactions of an adult not a child (Cornwall, 2007, pp.142-146). It is not unreasonable to assume that the adults in nearby Gablonz experienced the same anxieties and confusion about their future now again to be decided by Czechs.

7.7 The Arrival of the Russians

The distant rumble of the advancing Russian army announced its imminent arrival which happened on 6 and 7 May 1945. The soldiers appeared dirty with brown uniforms, but behaved peaceably in and around Gablonz (16M33).

10M34 still has clear memories of the Russians driving past for days in an unending stream of vehicles, tanks, on bikes, on foot, with horse-drawn wagons, cars and lorries. He also saw his first black man, a lorry driver. A group of people stood beside the road and looked at this procession, a moving column of war. A Russian officer stopped his car and told the onlookers in German not to stand by the roadside. They were the fighting troops, they did not need to worry about them, but warned against those coming up behind. According to 11M39 their family's manufacturing unit was occupied and the Russians stripped out all the machinery in it. Russians could also be observed driving hundreds of German soldiers through Gruenwald near Gablonz. Beforehand, as the German military were retreating, Jan Bitman (1JB) the Czech historian, remembers columns of their prisoners being beaten while forcibly being marched through Morchenstern, his home town. Another boy, 9M38, wrote that after 8 May Russians drove through Rochlitz in armoured vehicles, and also remembers columns of German prisoners being chased past their house in the main street. They were hit with rifle butts and

kicked in the heels to speed them up. The farmers' leader in their village was killed, and the boy witnessed a German soldier being publically beaten to death in the market square by Czech partisans, something he has never forgotten. A neighbour and his son had to dig their own graves and were shot into it, because a discarded SS uniform was found in their house. 9M38's father chronicled the names of people shot and hanged and those who committed suicide [List enclosed in correspondence].

There were rapes. Women would stay clothed all night and sit huddled together in terrified groups, speaking softly, encouraging one another. A 22-year old aunt and a friend hid in a loft covered by hay. In Trautenau young women had to stay hidden for weeks to avoid being raped (16M33). 1F40 was a 5 year old girl when she suddenly had to flee their big house to her grandmother in Wiesental, where mother and aunt hid in a small room after the children had helped to move a wardrobe in front of the door.

Generally Russians came into houses to take booty (6F40), often their soldiers went from house to house, taking what they wanted, many had several watches on their arms (9M38). In the summer of 1945, after Russians had searched their house, 14F39 remembered there was no linen and clothing left in the wardrobes. Russians were always considered unpredictable as observed by one respondent (10M34), 11 years of age at the time. As two Red Army soldiers and two civilians thundered at his family's door, they fled to some Czech friends' flat at the rear of their house. However, they came back later and uncle asked them what they wanted, "women and schnapps" was the answer, and went on to steal all their "good" things, stored in the cellar by his mother. Though only a boy, he managed to stop her from using an axe hidden under her apron to defend their possessions. His uncle was shot in the thigh, the Russians dragged him through the house, bleeding heavily while they were pulling out all the drawers. The uncle having lost consciousness the boy remembers helping the Czechs at the back of the house to take him to hospital on a handcart. Although he was treated, as a German he was not allowed to stay in hospital, but he survived.

As an 8-year old 5M38 heard terrible stories of atrocities committed by Mongol Russian troops advancing from the east, his Czech relations spoke about them too. He remembers Russian soldiers in tanks waving and women in uniform on motor bikes and considered them peaceful as did another respondent (2M36), who lived next to the Russian command centre and often had meals there. According to 13M39, Russians did indeed often show kindness towards children. One respondent, 6F40, writes, that after her mother was drafted in for forced labour, the Russians wanted to take the little girl with them as a "wolf-child", a term used for war-orphans roaming the woods and countryside, particularly in what used to be the old German provinces of East and West Prussia (Lees, 2011).

Participant 13M39 remembers when the Russians came through their idyllic village high above Gablonz. One looked through the house for schnapps, then took some new handkerchiefs, the

boy's birthday present. After the boy started to cry, the Russian put them down again and even smoothed them out. But unpredictably, as mentioned, having shown kindness he then went to a neighbour's house and shot a young woman in the leg when she fled. Whenever Russians rode past his heart pounded with fear. His family did not turn the light on in the evenings.

1F40-2M36-3F35-4F38-5M38-6F40-7F39-8F38-9M38-10M34-11M39-12F35-13M39-14F39-15F39-16M33 11

7.8 The pre-expulsion period as experienced by the German war children

Listening to enemy broadcasts was a punishable offence and only few Germans would have realised the significance of speeches broadcast on Czech radio by the Czech president and his colleagues from exile and after returning.

5M38 writes that to start off with, adults had been primarily worried about the Russians, and were quite unprepared for the hostility expressed by Czech politicians recently returned from exile. Mostly unaware of the Beneš decrees they were surprised and totally shocked by the Czechoslovak government's intentions which became clear when stickers were fixed to German houses reading "nemcy ven, rusky sem" which his Czech grandmother translated as "Germans out, Russians in", also "Heim ins Reich mit euch" (Get home to the Reich). Young and old were forced to wear white armbands with the letter 'N' for Němec (German). The mood in the adult population became very anxious and soon completely desperate, when Beneš broadcast that Germans were now outlaws without legal rights. The family of 11M39, owners of a factory, were appalled by that prospect. At that stage many people could not cope with what lay in store for them in the future. After Germany's defeat and the arrival of the Russians a wave of suicides had begun which continued en masse (Meissner Chronik, p. 218) once the expulsion of the Germans became a certainty.

According to 10M34 his family had moved to the country but returned when rumours reached them about plundering and houses being burnt down. An eight year old girl, 8F38, writes how she insisted on attending the Czech school, but was kept behind, as she had no Czech language knowledge. After May 1945 German children were no longer allowed to go to school so grandparents and family taught them the three Rs at home. She heard Czechs say "Dobri den-Nemci ven" (Good day-Germans out). 7F39 could not understand why she was not allowed to speak German in the street, or to go to the kindergarten. She heard about abuse of Germans, but could not comprehend what was going on. Only 2 respondents, one boy from the core-group and another one from Schwaebisch Gmuend, had previously noticed some signs of inter-ethnic tensions.

Soon matters would take a turn for the worse as Czechs, variously describing themselves as partisans (2MC), resistance fighters, Red Guards or belonging to a mottled mass of self-appointed people who flooded in from outside the area and, according to respondents, acted like the “master-race”. One had better step off the pavement when coming across them (16M33). 14F39, also a little girl of 6, was spat at in the street, had to step off the pavement for Czechs from elsewhere, and got pushed to the back of queues. She, like the rest of the children, was confused and completely taken aback by how she was treated. 5M38’s German grandfather was beaten to the ground, forced into hard labour and died soon after. However, violence was not a general occurrence where they lived (9M38). What is always stressed in the testimonies is that they do not remember the local Gablonz Czechs being nasty to them or their parents.

1F40-2M36-3F35-4F38-5M38- 6F40-7F39-8F38-9M38-10M34-11M39-12F35-13M39-14F39-15F39-16M33 7

Conclusion

In Gablonz the Czech minority had assessed their difficult situation early on and avoided trouble by not drawing attention to themselves. The Gestapo had its eyes and ears everywhere and any signs of criticism towards the Reich’s regime would have meant a one-way ticket to Auschwitz or Mauthausen.

When it looked as if Germany was winning the war, they kept their disappointment to themselves until the situation changed in favour of the Allies, when they adopted a “wait and see” attitude. This, as described in 3.17 (Petr Koura, 2002), appeared to be typical of the attitude of many Czechs while under German occupation.

While the Germans were kept in the dark about the real state of events by the Reich’s intensifying propaganda to boost morale, the Czechs, better informed by their Czech language short-wave broadcasts, did not expect the war to be won by Germany after 1943. Members of the Czech community in Gablonz after 1938 had economic and familial reasons to stay, or just wanted to remain in what had become their home area. The pre-expulsion peaceful ethnic co-existence in Gablonz and District, was based on the previous traditions of old. These were the unique work-related Czech/German bonds and strong social links within the local community described in previous chapters. To the Germans of Gablonz nothing seemed to have changed in the local Czechs’ interaction with them, not realising that what looked like compliance was just a commonsense reaction to their situation. The testimony of the Czech local historian acknowledges that it must have appeared that the Czechs had adjusted to being part of the Reich as indeed many had done.

Though the German war children's memories paint a picture of increasing pressure on respondents' families, particularly from May 1945, they stressed it was not caused by the local Czech people. They were just Gablonzers like themselves and their parents, in line with predominately nationally indifferent perceptions. Even after negative behaviour by Czechs flooding in from nearby Czech areas became obvious, German Gablonzers remained unaware of the growing threat to their families' future.

When they finally realised that the prospect of their removal from Bohemia was a certainty, the whole expulsion scenario unfolding seemed unbelievable, totally shocking, incomprehensible and malicious. As Northern Bohemian civilians they could not understand why Nazi guilt was going to be a burden they would have to bear. They felt they had had justified reasons for welcoming the Annexation which for them was a *local* solution in respect of their problems with Czechoslovakia's government. However, through Hitler's involvement, they got caught up in the subsequent maelstrom of events which caused their own disaster in 1945.

Chapter 8

Czech and German Childhood memories of the Expulsions from Gablonz

8.1 The Expulsions and their aftermath

After the Czech Government's return from exile, plans for the expulsion of the German population were acted upon. Everyone who had described themselves as German in 1938 was now on a list for transportation out of the country a procedure called "Odsun" by the Czechs, loosely translated as "Transfer", but described as "Expulsion" or "officially sanctioned Ethnic Cleansing" by the descendants of 3.5 million Germans and 500,000 Hungarians. In historiography this split in terminology still persists, and is the cause of ongoing debates among Central European historians, politicians and the media, depending on national orientation.

The information in the following sections was supplied by the German war childrens' testimonies about their own experiences supplemented by those of the Czech participants.

Soon their Bohemian/Sudeten German families realised that their days in Czechoslovakia were numbered. Marauding gangs of Nationalist and Communist Czechs started to be active in the district. 5JT wrote that soon people calling themselves "partisans" arrived in lorries from the Czech area of Železný Brod/Eisenbrod. They were only interested in material gain. 2MC writes, "Partisans indeed!"¹⁷ They called the local Czechs traitors because of their links with the Germans up to then, had never previously fought anywhere, but were now confronting a defenceless enemy. Material gain was high on their list of priorities. Families, mostly women, children and old people were either chased out immediately or just given a short time to leave their homes. Others were able to move in with relations or friends, while waiting to be served the notice to leave, before being taken to a holding camp prior to their expulsion. Most people were held at the Reinowitz camp on the outskirts of Gablonz, before being transported. The despair and tense atmosphere in families, having been dispossessed and waiting for their departure is well remembered by most respondents. The whole scenario of having to look out on their town through barbed wire made no sense to the children who, even now in old age, vividly remember the details of what followed.

People were forced out of their houses and apartments, either by official notice or by strangers just moving in. Some families were given two hours to pack, others had to leave immediately like one respondent's grandfather who was woken one morning at 5.30 am and forced to leave half an hour later with just a briefcase. Some people were allowed to take 25-30kg or 50kg,

¹⁷ Indicating the fact that the term did not apply.

others next to nothing. In the holding camp and at various checkpoints items were confiscated or wantonly destroyed.

Once people knew they had to expect the official transportation order, there was a wave of suicides. All respondents were aware that this was happening, one directly referred to it. 9M38, seven years at the time, remembers how from June 1945 onwards, the first wave of expulsions got under way. Told the evening before transportation, elderly neighbours hanged themselves and set the farm on fire. He was looking at the burnt out remains of the farm (1/7) as his family were leaving their home. Agitation and anxiety had preceded the German mass suicides in Sudetenland (Meissner Chronik, pp. 210-230). Though no exact figures for Gablonz town and District are available, Jan Bitman, the Czech local historian estimates the number of those who chose death to have probably been in the low hundreds in Gablonz and Reichenberg. He knew 11 of them. One respondent mentioned 20 suicides in her small home town of Reichenau nearby.

8.2 Czech and German memories and comments

At the time of the expulsions 5JT went looking for his erstwhile German friend as he felt they were both victims now. He suddenly found whole streets in the town empty of inhabitants and his friend was also gone, as were the nice German shopkeepers he knew. 1JB tells us no excesses took place, and in his area, pre-transportation, all the Czech and German neighbours bade farewell to one another in an orderly fashion while the women cried.

The events before, during and after the expulsions as experienced by the German respondents are set out in the War Child Study in the following chapters. As a result of specifically targeted questionnaires insight into the effects on the victims of this particular ethnic cleansing scenario has been made possible. This provides valuable information not only for German war child research, but could be potentially of global significance when attempting to gauge the effects of war and displacement in childhood and later.

The people who moved to Jablonec after the war had very little interest in the town or knowledge of what had made the area so successful in the past. They did not appreciate the value of anything and ruined much (5JT). One example was the College of Art and Design (Kunstgewerbeschule) which had always been equipped to the highest standard with the most up to date machinery in order to ensure the acquisition of high-class technical skills needed for all Gablonz industries. The Communists, however, considered that branch of industry superfluous, seemingly pandering to bourgeois tastes. The school was stripped bare of all valuable equipment to be treated as scrap metal. However, afterwards it was realised that there was demand for Gablonz products in Russia. Certain factories were then re-established,

including Jablonex, which is still supplying markets abroad with pearls, beads and other components for the fashion jewellery trade.

5JT had shown talent pre-1945 and wanted to continue training and working in the industry. He was quite dismissive of the new Czech arrivals in his testimony and went to work with Germans for ten years, who were skilled specialists, and as such had not been allowed to leave¹⁸. 1JB did exactly the same as he too could not find people to work with among the new citizens of Gablonz. After the College was reactivated, few of the previous teachers wanted to continue under Communism. 5JT was asked to teach at the College and in the end spent 50 years there. He and others tried to get the facilities back to what they had once been but never managed to get standards back to pre-war levels. He feels somewhat sad remembering Gablonz as a once busy industrial centre where almost every house had a workshop on the ground floor and living quarters above. He often thinks of the people once active in putting their skills to good use, who had been “cleared out”, the Czechs’ term for the removal of the Germans.

The local Czech historian (1JB) remembers the time of the public proclamation of the German transfers in the main square in Morchenstern/Smržovka near Gablonz. There was just sparse applause from a few Czech bystanders while others wondered why this was happening. It appears therefore that at least in the town and district of Gablonz the planned expulsions were not so much the expression of the local Czech’s desire to be rid of the Germans but a political act planned to bring about the new revolutionary future for a post-1945 Slavic Czechoslovakia.

The Czech respondents’ attitudes and judgements to the transfers still conform to perceptions generally held by the older generation of Czechs. Certain stereotypes, familiar since the end of the war, are again repeated, i.e. that most Germans supported Henlein and agreed with Hitler’s expansion and annihilation plans which made them complicit in respect of the horrors of the war (1JB). The Germans very much disagree on the culpability issue, arguing that they were a civilian population who were not able to influence matters, even if they had known about all the horrors which had taken place during the Reich’s regime.

In the later stages of the transfers the Czech Government recognised that a considerable number of industries in the former German areas were vital for the Czechoslovak economy. When the expulsions threatened to drain trained man-power and specialists, also in the main services such as gas, electricity and water, individuals considered indispensable were not permitted to leave (Prinz, 2002, p. 412; Stoldt, 2002). Approximately 250,000 German speakers remained in Czechoslovakia post-war. Some who were married to Czechs remained for good others emigrated later, mainly to Germany and Austria. German respondent 7F39 and others wrote that they never knew about Nazi crimes until much later at school in post-war Germany

and emphasised their incredulity and also their families' distress about what had happened (5M38). After a subsequent approach to probe the issue again, only one of the Neugablonz respondents (14F39) managed to get a very elderly aunt to comment on rumours of Nazi misdeeds. However, she said, one could not be sure whether they were true or not.

All Czech respondents welcomed the end of the occupation and the defeat of Germany. They also believed that the transfers, supported and sanctioned, even supposedly ordered by the Allies, were necessary to preserve peace in Europe and that the transferees fared much better in Germany than if they had stayed (3JM).

2MC qualifies her views in view of anti-German excesses before and during the expulsions by stating that if everybody had lived according to the Ten Commandments nothing deplorable would have occurred. It is not clear from the Czech testimonies how the expulsions/transfers are judged, as a deliberate official act of ethnic cleansing or just as part of history. The rights and wrongs of the expulsions are only discussed by one Czech participant who approved, stating "... on the whole, the resettlement idea was deserved, logical and justified" (4JT).

Conclusion

The German testimonies demonstrate that Gablonz Germans were totally unprepared to be targeted in retaliation for NS crimes committed in Czechoslovakia and elsewhere without their knowledge or agreement. While they were expecting a better future for all in Gablonz in what was already peace time, their hopes soon turned to despair. Their testimonies starkly illustrate the deep hopelessness and desperation among the German families in the pre-expulsion period added to by the stress before, during and after the expulsions. Those feelings from the worst days of their childhood would haunt some participants throughout their lives. Both German and Czech respondents made references to the large number of German suicides in Sudetenland as a whole as well as locally.

Czech contributors felt that the problems in Sudetenland were the result of the rise of Henlein and his movement, without asking the question, why that had happened. In the German view, cause and effect had been inverted here. In their perception it was the boundary decisions after the First World War, Czech nationalism and Czech political (mis)management of German minority issues which led to growing Sudeten patriotism and the rise of Henlein.

In respect of attitudes to the transfers the judgements of the Czech respondents still conform to perceptions generally held by the older generation of Czechs. All agreed with the removal of the Germans. They also repeated certain stereotypes, familiar since the end of the war, i.e. that most Germans agreed with Hitler's expansion and annihilation plans which made them complicit in respect of the horrors of the war (1JB).

No Czech participant mentioned any regret in respect of the human cost resulting from the decision to expel 3.5 million Bohemian/Sudeten German speakers. The German respondents on the other hand had very little idea of the profound effects of Munich and the Nazi occupation on the Czech mind-set. Mutual amnesia on what is historically most important to each side is still the cause of misunderstandings and misrepresentations even at academic levels.

The War Child Study

Research Strand 2:

The Human Dimension

The Effects of Sudeten History as experienced by Research Participants before, during and after the German Expulsions 1945/1946

Chapter 9

While up to now historical and political content was analysed in the testimonies examined, this is the start of the actual War Child Study aiming to investigate how German respondent's lives and mind-sets were shaped by their expulsion from their homes in Gablonz/Sudetenland, 1945/1946. The focus of the investigation in this social science research are the *effects of displacement* on children who had to cope with the trauma of being forcibly uprooted from their familiar home environment and having to deal with resettlement in an unfamiliar region and culture.

Priorities for this section and essential methodology are presented below. As is required for social science projects such as this, research data and results are abstracted, set out with a minimum of contextualisation, and highlighted where they are significant to facilitate immediate access to detailed information.

9.1 The effects of being uprooted on participants' life histories

The physical, mental, social, and emotional well-being of the former war children before, during and after being expelled.

1. How did the German research participants in this study *feel* about *their lives before, during and after* their expulsion?
2. What were their *reactions* and *emotions* in childhood and later as adults?
3. What was *the impact* of their experiences?
4. How were their *identities and mind-sets* affected through being uprooted and resettled in an unfamiliar area

5. What were *the sources of the Gablonzers' resilience, strength and motivation, in childhood and later* when they managed to turn adversity into success?

Respondents, members of the last German war child generation, generously provided their own valuable eye-witness testimony on all these issues.

9.2 The Question Topics

Apart from sourcing and selecting suitable respondents for any social science research project, one of the greatest challenges is the selection and presentation of appropriate question topics to achieve the best quality feedback on the research issues targeted. To demonstrate how this task was managed four examples of Questionnaires filled in with testimony of individual life-histories have been chosen to be viewed in the Appendix.

The Topics identified below transcend their specific relevance to Gablonz respondents' life histories as they are relevant within the overall field of War Child studies. Themes, such as the importance of the *sources of resilience* have not only been of interest to researchers in Germany but are explored within the global context of War Child studies. This is the first time a war child study has systematically attempted to deal with as many aspects of interest in social research as possible

1. What was the impact of events on participants personally before, during and after their expulsion?
2. What shaped the personalities of participants prior to the enforced disruption in their lives? Were there noticeable changes afterwards?
3. What were the effects on the children after the abrupt end of their childhood and their families' struggle thereafter?
4. How did they fare post-childhood as adolescents, in adulthood and old age?
5. Where can the origins of post-war energy and productivity be found?
6. How do they judge their circumstances then and now?
7. How do they judge the effects of what they had to experience and witness?
8. How did the transformation from victims of expulsion to successful post-war Germans come about? What were the sources of their strength and endurance in adverse conditions, and of their resilience afterwards?
9. Are there noticeable trans-generational consequences of their initially blighted lives?

Respondents' answer material on the above issues was categorised and evaluated according to methods used in social science research, such as tables, lists and models as part of qualitative and quantitative assessments. What can we learn from their testimony feedback about the effects of the periods, which had such a defining influence on their lives?

Research Results. In keeping with social science practice they are set out clearly and separately from supporting text sections, and marked in bold where they are of significance. A diagram providing a visual representation of factors having affected respondents' temperament and outlook is also included in this chapter.

Qualification and Quantification of individual answers is made according to question topic, gender and age. Numerical and percentage values help to gain an immediate overview within the study. However, the numbers tested in the German core-group (16) were a limiting factor in respect of wide-ranging statistical assessments. Nevertheless, though research participants in this study are a unique group with their own specific history, they share certain aspects of their life-stories with the whole cohort of German war-children. *The Childhood in War Project* (Prof. M. Ermann, University of Munich) proved to be most suitable for comparisons with this study for reasons dealt with at a later stage.

Examining all the important psychological aspects in the childhood of research participants and later, the subject was addressed from the "inside", from the perspective of a war child's experience, and from the "outside", which takes account of the priorities of present War Child research. As is frequent practice in social research some testimony excerpts are reproduced "in extenso". On a few occasions this was the most appropriate method to convey participants' messages.

As the roots of emotional well-being and human behaviour are found in childhood, it is important to find out what shaped the childhood personalities of participants before the enforced break in their lives. Any changes afterwards will also be tracked.

The Method of data presentation in the tables below includes information on gender, the year participants were born and numerical and percentage values to facilitate an immediate overview and comparison of research results within this study and others

Legend: Example: 1F40, 1 (number on list of respondents) F Female, born 1940. 2M36: 2 (on list) M Male, born 1936. Respondents who provided information for the thematic categories in the left column, are marked in colour according to gender while those who did not are left plain.

9.3 Respondents' pre-expulsion childhood and their personalities

The children: happy and untroubled, surrounded by family and friends	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	8
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	6
	1 serious but content	14
	1 sometimes lonely and sad	+ 2
Part of an extended family	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39 2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-3911M-13M39-16M33	16
Well off (in colour)	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	11
Comfortably off (white)	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-3911M-13M39-16M33	5

88% of respondents described themselves as happy and content children pre-expulsion.

A deep fondness for the attractive surroundings of Gablonz was cited in almost all of their testimonies. There they spent a happy childhood being able to access and play in extensive, ancient woodlands, strewn with large boulders, a legacy of the last ice-age. Blueberries, wild strawberries as well as edible mushrooms would be gathered there and used in traditional Czech and German Bohemian cooking and baking. In the past the Bohemian mountain ranges have always been the subject of poetry and songs and even after 70 years the region is still regarded as “Heimat” by the majority of research participants. It was the place where they and their ancestors were born and as one respondent wrote “Heimat” has no plural, you only have it once and it hurts when you lose it.

100% of children were brought up in functioning families. All 16, had fond memories of being part of an extended family, where they felt cared for and cherished, having frequent contact with friends and neighbours. All parents were economically secure as a result of fathers being able to support their families, the children being looked after as part of extended families also in one case including Czech family members. This stability in the pre-expulsion period had a significant influence later on.

Life in Gablonz was traditional and typical of the way it was and is by and large still lived by the bourgeoisie on the Continent. Family life and all it entails is regarded as important, as is an emphasis on good educational standards, solid vocational training and aiming to do a job well. The families of respondents were involved in large and small scale manufacturing in the local glass and metal industries, in product design, sales, export management, tailoring, farming,

were shop and pub owners, or worked in the local administration. Three well known originally German Bohemian firms, Porsche, Swarovski and Riedel (famous for revolutionising the design of wine glasses) are still trading successfully globally after more than a 100 years.

69% of respondents came from a well-off background, 31% were comfortably off.

88% wrote of their families' good contacts with Czechs. A number of parents and relations were reported to have socialised with Czechs during the interwar period, a time of supposed inter-ethnic strife. It appears that nationally indifferent Czech-German interaction would happen not only in mixed families, but with neighbours, Czechs at school, in sporting associations and in the workplace.

9.4 A childhood disrupted by the start of the Expulsions

				2 boys +	2 boys +	
1 boy: 12	1 boy: 11	2 girls: 10	1 boy: 9	2 girls: 7	3 girls: 6	2 girls: 5

Figure 13 Participants' ages in 1945

Having coped with all the problems the war brought with it, the end of it was the beginning of very much harder times for all respondents' families, who could not quite believe they would lose everything. Though the violence against German-speakers documented elsewhere in Sudetenland was not a dominant feature locally, the pre-expulsion period was nevertheless a nerve-racking and desperate time for the German families. Germans were at this stage losing their homes and most of their possessions before being held in a holding-camp. The children absorbed the sense of despair and hopelessness all around them, and felt frightened and helpless not knowing the full extent of what to expect. The strain of living under oppressive conditions comes across in all testimonies. This had a very damaging long-term effect on one of them in particular, 7F39, whose testimony is reproduced in the Appendix.

All families were	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	16
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forced to leave home	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-3911M-13M39-16M33	
Held at the local internment camp	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39 2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-3911M-13M39-16M33	15
Camp Guards described as unpredictable, helping themselves to items out of the internees' luggage.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39 2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-3911M-13M39-16M33 (Attendants of expulsion trains acted similarly)	5 3 8
The state of children's minds in their own words: confused, frightened, desperate, sad or enraged and noticing the dejected mood of the adults.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39 2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-3911M-13M39-16M33	6 5 11

100% - all 16 families were served the dreaded order to leave home.

69% of the children (split almost equally between boys and girls) **reported not being able to understand what was happening in 1945.**

94% - 15 families were held in an internment camp, some for weeks, others for months.

50% of families had items taken from their luggage by camp guards and during checks.

69% of the the children felt frightened, desperate, sad or enraged, yet none the wiser as to why they had to leave their homes. It was that feeling of "the unmentionable", which unsettled them most. They felt "weighed down by the general atmosphere"; other phrases used were "we were not told anything, parents shielded us"

12F35 writes: *The saddest Christmas was 1945, In January, at - 25C we were called to be transported. Buried valuables, don't know what happened to them. Took papers, gemstones, diamonds were hidden in buttons. We packed our few belongings, 30kg, including my doll, and my 90 year old great-grand-mother onto a sledge and joined a never ending trail of misery leading to the Reinowitz camp. There in a large hall hundreds of people waited for weeks to be*

transported. Grandparents were also held, in barracks. Mother was threatened, had to work as a secretary for the very unpredictable Czech in charge of the local camp (1/6).

38% of families managed to hide money and/or some valuables in their luggage or sewn into clothes and bedding. According to 15F39 “the nicest things were stolen from the family’s possessions at check-points”. For a long time she could not retrieve some gold-coins, hidden between her shoe-soles, as post expulsion there was no money for new soles.

19% of participants’ families buried valuables but were never able to retrieve them.

Valuables buried before leaving, never to be recovered by their owners.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	2
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	1
		3
Some items smuggled out	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	5
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M	1
		6

9.5 The Expulsions: the reaction of the children.

Transport: in cattle or coal wagons	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	16
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	

100% - 16 families were loaded into either open or closed and locked cattle wagons not knowing where they were going or what the future held for them. All former children have very clear memories about that event which are reflected in great detail in their testimonies. 44% of the children wrote they were at first thinking of it as an adventure, but the aggressive behaviour of the train-attendants and the adults’ distress soon made them fearful.

Being transported out of Czechoslovakia, a testing time for the children

It became immediately necessary to learn self-control and to suppress one’s feelings and individual desires. This would also become a necessary feature of respondents’ behaviour throughout the post-war years. Putting others first for the greater good of those around them is a recurring theme in German war child literature (Ermann, 2009; Bode, 2009).

13M39 wrote *Three weeks of oppressive situations in the locked cattle transporter crammed full of people, chaos when changing trains in the middle of the night. In various camps 40 people to a room, quarrels, fever, inoculations, quarantine camp, hunger, one was forced to suppress any reaction. On top of that not knowing how things would turn out, what was going to happen (1/7).* 14F39 remembers that a baby had died during the journey and was just put down on the railway embankment after people were told to get off the train.

25% mentioned anxieties and feelings of insecurity in later life going back to the times of the expulsion

Aversions: 25% cannot bear certain smells reminding them of their time in the cattle transporter and staying in camps, 9M38, 3F35, 13M39. 12F35.

Not everybody coped. One example, 7F39, stands out. She has retained a life-long food neurosis going back to rumours that the Czechs were poisoning Germans slowly by mixing arsenic into camp-food, (there was also a general fear that mercury was added to milk for babies). To this day she dreads being enclosed in dark rooms, fears another war, losing everything again, and worries about the future. This person was the only one who described herself as traumatised by her childhood experiences.

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9.6 The Post-Expulsion Period.

The first years in the Host Region

Quite a few families ended up first spending some time in the Soviet Zone or elsewhere in the Western Sector of Germany, before being able to join other Gablonzers in Kaufbeuren, Bavaria. One respondent wrote of his relief to finally being in the American sector after leaving the Soviet Zone. He still remembers the feeling of freedom, not having to whisper and walk about, head bowed, avoiding eye-contact in order not to draw attention to oneself.

Not welcomed in the host region and regarded as intruders

On top of having lost everything, the 14 -16 million German homeless refugees and expellees were everything but welcome in the German host regions. After their arrival in rural Bavaria, many expellees from Bohemia experienced hostility by the locals. The experiences of respondents echo much of what Kossert (2008) has described in his book "Kalte Heimat" (Cold Homeland) about the experiences of those who fled the advance of the Red Army on arrival in West-Germany.

The Gablonzers were confronted with the same local reactions because the citizens of Kaufbeuren regarded them as intruders and felt they were being swamped by a never-ending

human avalanche. To show solidarity with their German-speaking kinsfolk and share basic essentials with them did not initially come naturally to most natives.

Depressing experiences and negative effects on the children

A marked change in outlook: troubled disorientated, sad, lonely and homesick. Missing family members, former friends and neighbours.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	6
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	5
		11
Poverty, deprivation. Regarded as gypsies.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	5
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	3
		8
Suffering cold and hunger. Begging. Scouring the fields for anything edible.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	6
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	5
		11
Lack of clothing, ashamed.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	3
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	1
		4
Sickness	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	2
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	1
		3
Father absent, missing him.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	3
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	2
		5

69% of the children experienced a marked change from an originally happy outlook. Post-expulsion they felt disorientated, sad, troubled, lonely and homesick, pining for the life left behind.

50% of respondents reported levels of poverty and deprivation they had never known. 14F39 wrote that parents were occasionally sad, and so was she, compared to what they had left behind.

25% recollect being ashamed and feeling inferior because of a lack of essentials. They were often regarded as gypsies on account of their shabby appearance wearing ill-fitting garments provided by the Red Cross. However, they never tired of trying to get the message across, they were Sudeten expellees not gypsies or refugees; they had not “run away”.

69% suffered from cold and hunger. Children and adults had to go begging for food to the Bavarian farmers as rations were inadequate. Scouring the fields for anything edible was another way of staving off hunger. It took time before the food situation stabilised. As one respondent wrote, “... in the early days “Hunger” always sat with us at the table.”

19% suffered from life-threatening illnesses such as typhus and diphtheria during and just after the time of the expulsions.

31% mentioned missing their absent fathers. All fathers eventually returned from the war, one after 10 years imprisonment in Czechoslovakia. According to Radebold (2000) the prolonged absence of fathers in early childhood can be one of the causes of mental damage and instability in adult life. This contributed to later emotional problems reported by four participants (25%).

Bonds with the extended family, friends and neighbours had been abruptly severed by the expulsions. This was a major source of regret to the children and later adults, but also caused considerable life-long distress to many. However, many of these bonds were renewed with visits to relations and friends scattered all over Germany and Austria.

After a settled and comfortable home-life the disruption and circumstances created by the families’ predicament were painful, humiliating and a heavy burden to bear for the majority of the children.

9.7 Gradual transition to normalisation: mixed experiences

Expellee-refugee accommodation: extremely basic, cramped, overcrowded. Primitive sanitation.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	9
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	5
		14
The host-population: reserved, suspicious and hostile.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	5
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	3
		8
The host- population, e.g. teachers, helpful.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	4
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	3
		7
Adjustment followed soon. School: dialect incomprehensible, they learnt it and started to integrate.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	8
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	6
		14
Adjustment: difficult	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	1
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	1
		2
Family Life Being supportive to parents, expected to help them.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	7
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	6
		13
Loss of childhood, in charge of younger siblings, having to grow up early.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	3
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	5
		8
Parents: post-war	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	1

marriage break-down	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	1
		2
Family life: stressful	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39 2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	6
Having to suppress feelings	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	7
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	4
		11
Weighed down by the situation	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	4
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	3
		7

The host-population was initially regarded as hostile and helpful in almost equal measure. However, the burghers of Kaufbeuren soon realised that something needed to be done to help the new arrivals and started a very effective programme of organising daily hot meals cooked by an army of volunteers. This “Volkskueche” helped to bridge the time until the newcomers could provide for themselves again (Roessler, 1986).

Post-Expulsion Living Conditions

88% experienced very poor accommodation, typical for most German expellees and refugees at the time. The women were clearly more affected than the men, as *almost twice as many females than males pointed that out*.

Expellees were either housed in bed-bug infested barracks or with farmers who were often hostile and reluctant to give up any of their living space to strangers. People ended up in former stables, lofts, cellars, out-houses or similar, frequently sharing with strangers, having to put up with extremely basic, cramped and overcrowded conditions, often for years. For the children to be able to spend most of the time out of doors was therefore a great advantage, as according to the testimonies, their families' accommodation was in all cases initially totally inadequate and substandard. As mentioned, food was scarce and many wrote about berries and mushrooms from the woods having to supplement their diet. One female respondent wrote how she got sick of having a daily diet of wild mushrooms cooked as gulash, schnitzel, boiled, fried with or without parsley

A positive side of participants' post expulsion lives was not forgotten. They were among their own people, who helped one another, and as everybody was in the same situation,

the children on the whole just accepted their lot. When they were told years later that one young teacher could not bear to see their poverty and deprivation and left, they realised that their perception of the situation was not quite as extreme. This is something Boyden (2003) stresses in connection with present-day aid programmes, children often do not share the assessment of their situation by adults as they have their own value systems.

Family Life

The majority of participants reported having been supportive to parents as part of the family pulling together as a team.

50% reported their childhood was abruptly terminated at a very early age, as young as 7 for some, followed by active engagement with adult duties. Early loss of childhood is often referred to in war child literature, as is having to parent parents who are unable to cope. This was not the case here, as the majority of parents seemed to have remained strong, though the impression was that there were difficulties. Some mothers collapsed after arriving in Bavaria, while others suffered from depression at times, and alcoholism became a problem for a few men as well as women. These are all recognised responses to prolonged stress.

38% remember post-expulsion family life being stressful. Only females answered that question. Was it because the girls were more involved in the domestic struggle than the boys? They may also have been more aware of the strains of life on very meagre resources and more perceptive of their parents' difficulties, particularly those of their mothers.

69%, felt they had to suppress their feelings in order not to burden parents or hurt their feelings (almost twice as many girls than boys). Again female sensitivities may have played a role here. Both women and men mentioned how much they sympathised in retrospect with their parents, particularly their mothers, after they themselves had become parents.

44% felt weighed down – “belastet” as children (carrying a burden, being weighed down) This is a key term in War-Child studies, always of importance in the caring and medical professions in connection with traumatic effects on individuals.

38% are still feeling “belastet” as adults.

13% of parents experienced a post-war marriage break-down, much to the regret of the children, adding to their stress. That figure is slightly lower compared to 14.6% overall in Germany (1950), (Theologische Linksammlung, 2012).

9.8 Gradual integration into the host region

Found the alpine scenery of the new Heimat attractive, not dissimilar to Bohemia. Woodland surroundings and river: ideal for all the children, they wrote of wonderful games.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	8
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	3
		11
School: Soon made new friends, but kept missing old ones. Progress with integration. (63%)	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	5
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	5
		10
As a result of their experiences the children had learnt to exercise self-control, take responsibility and be self reliant early on.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	4
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	7
		11

69%, referred in positive terms to the attractive Alpine surroundings of their second home region (more than twice as many females than males answered that question). All appreciated the many opportunities to roam about and play games in the extensive woods covering the huge area which was once the site of the munitions-producing Dynamit AG. This land was to become Neugablonz after just a few years.

87% of respondents reported that they adjusted quickly and started to integrate in spite of the fact that the Allgäu dialect was initially incomprehensible to them, they soon learnt it. The distractions of childhood helped to stop the children looking back and equal numbers of boys and girls stated that they began to integrate, once they started school.

69% thought that they had been through a character building time. They had learnt to think for themselves, be independent and act responsibly, all of which was of benefit then and later. All the males put themselves into that category in comparison with less than half of the females (gender stereotype present in that generation?).

While many of the older generation just socialised exclusively with fellow Bohemians, others, however, soon got involved in local Bavarian politics and community affairs to the benefit of both populations. Over time differences between the two different “tribes”, Bavarians and Bohemians, became blurred and Bavarian natives and former expellees have got along without major problems ever since. However, Neugablonz was for a long time also known as the Ghetto.

9.9 Life for the adults

13M39 Parents were very busy and wasted no time being sad or looking back. Relations who had lost a mill and farm were now farm hands and did complain, justifiably. Generally though comparisons with “before” were useless, one had to get on with things in spite of all the deprivations. Very few did nothing while waiting to return. Most thought their chances in Bavaria were good and remained optimistic.

Above all the relief to be free and allowed to be German again is a theme which surfaces time and again.

At first many of the older generation believed they would be able to go back, but few people waited for that to happen. Almost everybody believed having hit rock-bottom that things would get better, worked hard and looked ahead. They had to start from scratch again, making the first items of furniture from packing cases, other basics were made from wood, bricks and metal salvaged from the dynamited factory buildings on the land of the former Dynamit AG, the future Neugablonz (2M36, 5M38, 13M39).

On leaving Gablonz, nobody had been allowed to take away factory documents or company papers. Machinery was constructed from memory, sometimes using components from Bavarian farm implements (15F39). Contact with former customers world-wide was quickly re-established again, as addresses had been memorised, which helped to renew old business links. One remark, repeated several times was “... they [the Czechs] could take everything but not what our parents carried in their heads.”

The Families’ Domestic and Business Recovery

94% of families had reached a level of economic success in the early to mid-1950s, when housing and daily existence could be considered mainstream again. This was a time of great

optimism but unfortunately not everybody could share that feeling as will become clear in the next section.

Parents worked day and night. Post-war loans, credits and compensation aided business and domestic recovery. Early 1950s: re-establishment of normal business and family life.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	9
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	6
		15

9.10 The Post-Expulsion Temperament of the children - a change

Post-Expulsion: no changes in temperament.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	2
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	3
	2 serious and 3 cheerful	5
Feeling marked forever. At times troubled, serious, more reserved, anxious, introverted.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	7
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	4
		11

31%, 5 considered their basic outlook unchanged, 3 describing themselves as optimistic and cheerful, as before, while 2 still had a tendency towards depression, as previously.

69%, 11 out of 16 respondents considered themselves to have been adversely affected by the break in their lives marked forever by their experiences, having changed to a more serious, reserved and introverted personality type after the expulsion. Almost twice as many females than men were affected in this way. In spite of having coped with the break in their lives, they reported having become troubled and anxious as children and at times as adults. One, 7F39, experienced a profound change in a negative direction (see full testimony in

Appendix). How they and the others coped with that situation and judged the outcome in later life is recorded in the later sections of this chapter.

9.11 Post-expulsion: emotional reactions

Sadness, depression anger, rage, worries anxieties	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	4
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	3
		7
Nightmares, panic attacks	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	2
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	1
		3
Mental-physical break-down	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	2
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	2
		4
Excessively careful before taking decisions.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	0
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	1
Still burdened ("belastet")	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	3
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	3
		6
Traumatised	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	1
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	
Circumstances stopped fulfilment of career wish educational ambitions.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	6
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	

The year of birth did not have any significance, there were no specific years of importance.

Evaluation: emotional reactions

Trauma

1 female only has felt traumatised all her life.

Breakdown:

25% - 2 males and 2 females suffered a breakdown and severe emotional problems which needed treatment in adult life, 3 recovered, 1 female still suffers from problems.

“Belastet”

38% of adults still feel “belastet” (weighed down) by their childhood experiences.

Depression

44% reported recurring sadness, depression, anger, rage, anxieties and worries.

Nightmares and panic attacks

19% of participants were affected.

There is no obvious gender split apparent in the preceding items unlike in

Career and educational choices

44% (6 females, only 1 male), felt circumstances prevented fulfilment of their own career wishes or educational ambitions because of the need to assist in their families' recovery. The larger number of females typically points to the usual gender role of their generation. They had to show greater flexibility, fitting in with family requirements, while males had less pressure on them in this respect.

16 Diagram: Participants' Outlook before and after the Expulsions, Ages, Gender

Post-Expulsion Personality Changes (Figure 14: Diagram)






































Information on 6 inter-related aspects of interest in war child research are shown in the diagram

Participant's year of birth - number of respondents for each birth year - gender
(male-female split?)

Child's original pre-expulsion temperament - post-expulsion changes of temperament

Post-expulsion - life-long consequences

Figure 14 Post-Expulsion Personality Changes

					15F39+	
					 	
				8F38+	14F39*	
				 	   B	
				4F38+	7F39*	
				 	   T	
		3F35*		9M38+	13M39+	6F40+
		  B		  B	  B	 
16M33*	10M34+	12F35+	2M36*	5M38*	11M39+	1F40+
 	   	 	 	   B	 	  B
1933	1934	Year 1935	of 1936	Birth 1938	1939	1940
1	1	2	1	4	5	2
	Number	of	Resp.	per	year	

M male **F** female, originally well off +, comfortably off *, **B** – belastet (weighed down), **T** – traumatised

Pre-Expulsion: happy 😊 serious 😐 sad 😞 Post-Expulsion: happy 😊 serious 😐 depressive 😞
breakdown 😞

B – belastet (weighed down) affected 6 (38%) respondents born 1935 1938,1939 and 1940.

T – 4 suffered a breakdown, 1 traumatised for life

9.12 Negative experiences leading to positive outcomes in later life

Became assertive-ambitious-(often impatient)	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39-2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	1
Positive, energetic, courageous	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39-2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	6
		5
		11
Always important: punctuality exactitude, order, cleanliness. Perfectionism: (7F39, 5M38)	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39-2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	7
		4
		11

69% thought of themselves as positive, energetic and courageous, particularly in a work environment, 1 male described himself as assertive-ambitious and to his regret often impatient.

Looking for obvious obsessions, only 7F39 called herself a life-long compulsive perfectionist, while 16M33, was getting ever more patient as time went by.

69%, wrote about their priorities, even foibles: order, cleanliness, punctuality, exactitude. Almost twice as many females as men answered this question, but stressed they could also be relaxed about those “Prussian virtues”.

9.13 Reasons given for respondents' capability in adult life

The impressive example of parents-grandparents, a stable home-life, Tireless application to the tasks in hand.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	4
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	4
		8
Children had learnt early to exercise self-control, take responsibility, be self-reliant, accept things as they were	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	2
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	4
		6
Great efforts of all the family, years of thrift, not giving up, believing in the future.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	7
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	5
		12
Careful in using resources, even now. Edible food is not thrown away-memories of past hunger periods.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	7
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	5
		12
Being sociable, part of an active community-life.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	9
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	6
		16
Religion: support	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	7
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	5
		12

Capability in adult life

50% named the important example of parents and grandparents, a stable home-life, and tireless application to the tasks in hand..

75% remembered the great efforts made by all the family, years of thrift, not giving up, and believing in the future. Families being an example of strength and ingenuity in the effort to rebuild their personal and professional lives.

38% had learnt to exercise self-control early, take responsibility, be self-reliant and accept things as they were.

100%, all 16 respondents consider themselves sociable. All are still very active in local community-life.

75% mentioned being careful in using resources, e.g. edible food is not thrown away- past hunger periods have not been forgotten.

75% described themselves as religious. They found their church supportive and continue to be involved with it.

All these factors contributed later on to a beneficial outcome in the lives of the majority of respondents. The reasons are fully explained in the Summary at the end of this chapter.

The researcher was struck by participants' alert yet easy manner with one another and in communication with her over several years. Almost as if their early experiences had made them more philosophical vis-a-vis the ways of the world.

9.14 Retirement in the Allgäu of Bavaria. Life's balance sheet

Mainly good experiences	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	7
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	6
		13
Mainly mixed experiences	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39 2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	1
Mainly bad experiences	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	1
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	1
		2

Feeling positive, about life in the scenic Allgaeu (Allgäu) of Bavaria, a very good quality of life.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	5
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	5
		10
Life was hard, pleased to have succeeded, to have survived. Been ambitious and won the fight not to go under.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	8
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	7
		15
Enjoying retirement	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	8
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	6
		14
Happy to be allowed to be German, to live life in Germany.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	8
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	7
		15
Occasionally homesick	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	3
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	
Partially integrated only, still conscious of the old identity, though liking Bavaria.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F3	6
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	2
		8
Fully integrated	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F3	1
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	

94% stated that having coped with a hard life early, they were pleased to have succeeded as adults.

81% reported to having had mainly good experiences in life. 2 respondents concluded there had on balance been mainly bad experiences in their lives. 63% are feeling positive about life in the scenic Allgäu, the region of King Ludwig's castles.

88% are enjoying their comfortable retirement, leading full and rewarding lives.

Heimat-Identity-Integration

Participants are still conscious of their old identity, though very fond of Bavaria. Their identities are still rooted in Northern Bohemia and its culture which is still reflected in many aspects of their lives, their language, cooking and certain community activities unique to their old homeland, their "Heimat".

"Heimat"

Identity and the concept of "Heimat" have traditionally been closely connected, before mobility became a feature of modern life. Severance from one's homeland roots was always known to produce emotional reactions.

94% still feel Bohemian, all but one, still regard their identity as Bohemian and their "Heimat" (homeland) as Northern Bohemia, but are happy to live in Germany. After 70 years it is still the place where they and their ancestors were born, and which defined their cultural and linguistic identity, partially maintained ever since having had to leave. "Heimat" has no plural, you only have it once. Nowadays, in an era of globalisation this is not much of a problem for the younger generation since their "Heimat" is the world.

Full integration: only 1 male feels fully integrated

Partial Integration: 50%, 6 females and 2 males, feel partially integrated.

Homesick for the old "Heimat": 19%, 3 females only, wondering where they actually belong.

Children and grandchildren: though aware of their background, have become fully "naturalised" in their Bavarian home region.

"How would your life be, had the break not happened?" This question was answered very much in the same vein as the three examples provided below.

9M38: *If the Germans had stayed we would have had a wonderful homeland. But after the break things went uphill for us, downhill for them. We are happy in Bavaria.*

11M39: *As unjust and criminal the expulsions were for my parents and grandparents, I am of the opinion that the end result was preferable to life in the old homeland.*

5M38: *The feeling was, we had been lucky.*

Only two respondents (1F40, 7F39) thought life would have been better in the old homeland.

9.15 Opinions: Czechs - NS Crimes - Czech atrocities - the Present

No bad feelings towards Czechs, good and bad everywhere.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	2
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	5
		7
Negative feelings, resentments, anger. (Except against individual Czechs and the younger generation)	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	7
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	1
		8

44% feel no resentment towards Czechs (5 males and 2 females).

50% still harbour negative feelings (7 females, and 1 male), resentment and anger (excepting individual Czechs and the younger generation).

An interesting gender split is obvious here. Males seemed to have moved on, whereas the females seem less forgiving. Sympathy, often mentioned, for their mothers and elderly grandparents in respect of the treatment they received at the time of the expulsions may play a role here. Once the females themselves had small children, they began to realise how their mothers must have struggled, without husbands present to help with the family. One quote is poignant in this context. 9M38: *Hatred of the Czechs? No, both populations would have reasons for hate. Though father was almost beaten to death by Czech nationalists, he always said, those criminals were a minority.*

NS Crimes? Shock, incomprehension. Like any other crimes, criminals!	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	6
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	5
		11
Aware of Czech atrocities? Got to know about them later through survivors, family and the media.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	9
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	4
		13
Czechs should confront their history and apologise as the Germans have done.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	1
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	2
		3
Mutual forgiveness is the way forward. Normalisation within the EU desirable.	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	1
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	3
		4
The past is still relevant	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	7
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	5
		12
The past is best forgotten, blocked out	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	2
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	

81% became aware of Czech atrocities through survivors, family and the press. All females dealt with this question, but only just over half the men.

69% found out about NS crimes at school and reacted with shock and incomprehension. Males-females: almost equal numbers.

19% feel it is time Czechs confronted their history and apologised to their victims as the Germans have done.

25%, more males than females would like to see mutual forgiveness as the way forward and wish for normalisation within the EU.

75%, 7 females and 5 males feel the past is still relevant, while 2 males think it should be forgotten

Looking back in retirement - Reactions to the study

Reaction to the study: positive - 81%	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	6
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	7
		13
Reaction to the study: neutral - 19%	1F40-3F35-4F38-6F40-7F39-8F38-12F35-14F39-15F39	3
	2M36-5M38-9M38-10M34-11M39-13M39-16M33	

All respondents volunteered because they thought of the study as a worthwhile project. Some remarks about their reaction to the study are reproduced below:

16M33: *Positive. Your questions have awakened a lot of memories and it is good for me to write about it. I think the study has done justice to its task, it is good that those times and people are looked at scientifically and everything is thoroughly examined. The separation between fathers and sons during the war might have been given more attention, as this often led to estrangement and problems after being reunited.*

14F39: *Very positive, liked working on it, it meant a lot to me.*

13M39: *Positive. Generally, interest in the media has come too late. Time-witnesses are dead.*

6F40: *It is courageous. Media interest? Mostly annoying - distortions.*

5M38: *Positive, a voice in the desert.*

4F38: *Positive, interesting subject.*

7F3: Excellent

.

Though 69% of respondents considered themselves marked forever by their childhood experiences of being expelled and all it entailed, of 16 respondents only one female (7F39) felt acting ashe was permanently affected by her traumatic childhood. How did the majority of

participants manage to avoid permanent emotional damage in spite of very testing times, yet showed remarkable resilience as children at the time of the expulsions and later as adults? Looking for answers to this question led to the pioneering research on “Social Capital”, a concept created by Putnam (1993, 2000) who convincingly demonstrated the importance of social networks and community cohesion in the well being, efficiency and civic success of populations.

9.16 The Relevance of Social Capital in the Life-histories of Respondents

In line with Putnam’s theories it can be assumed that the resilience of the Gablonz expelled families was due to the all-embracing social cohesion and cooperation within their Gablonz and later Neugablonz communities. This enabled them to take *collective action* (Putnam 1993, p.167), when faced with very testing circumstances. What enabled them to do so were the core elements of social capital: *honesty, trust, trustworthiness, reciprocity and solidarity*, at all times present in respondents’ social environment, the family and community networks of Gablonz – Neugablonz. In addition, the spirit of *altruism, volunteering, and philanthropy* (Putnam, 1993, pp.172-173; 2000, pp. 117-147), another aspect of social capital had always been prevalent in old Gablonz and surfaced again in Neugablonz to everyone’s benefit

Networks including family, extended family, as well as neighbours and friends, basic core constituents of social capital were also found to be the basis for mental strength in adults by Emmy Werner, a respected American specialist in child-development. In extensive research since the 1950s she had identified protective factors relevant in childhood (Werner, 2001 p. 172). These are maternal competence, positive upbringing as well as love from others, a feeling of security and emotional support. Other elements of protection are having positive relations with family, friends, teachers and others and being able to draw on help from them during stressful times, as well as having a purpose in life and faith (Werner, 2001, pp. 187-213). All the Gablonz children had been competently parented and physically and emotionally supported by their families. They never gave the impression that they felt alone or abandoned.

From social capital based on family networks in the old cottage industries, extensive and remarkably close and cohesive community networks evolved, becoming a well known characteristic of social life in Gablonz town and District. These in turn led to the well known enthusiasm of Gablonzers and later Neugablonzers to participate in associational activities, civic, cultural and educational projects, as well as their involvement in religious and church activities.

As soon as families had settled with 20,000 fellow Gablonzers in the place to become Neugablonz, the old protective community network systems developed again, in spite of the disruption caused by the expulsions.

As mentioned in Chapter 5, Gablonz could be considered an example par excellence for the benefits of social capital. It is therefore of interest how its virtues developed during the 150 year period up to 1945.

The development of Social Capital within the population in Gablonz, Town and District

Family networks in the old cottage industries (pre-1830)
developed in conjunction with the expansion of Gablonz industries into



Extensive and cohesive community networks
which during the 19th century led to an explosion of



Clubs and Associations
which up to 1918 and beyond supported



Civic, cultural, and educational initiatives as well religious and church activities



resulting in the population being connected within many layers of social capital

The population ended up almost acting as a collective, a body of like minded people with a common purpose in prosperous as well as testing times. This was the reason behind their early economic success and was shown again in their recovery as individuals and as a population after 1945 in post-war Germany.

Conclusion

This chapter has not only demonstrated the amazing persistence, endurance and resilience shown by the war children and their families, but has also provided answers to the question, how it became possible for them to turn adversity into success. The research results of the War Child Study, as documented, evaluated and analysed, have uncovered the following important factors, which contributed to a positive outcome in the lives of respondents after disaster had struck.

Factors which helped to turn the War Children's victimhood into success were:

Social networks providing an abundance of social capital

Their presence in the community of Gablonz was crucial to the later success of their group. Starting with their families the war children in the study had at all times been part of overlapping protective social networks providing social capital. This kept physical and emotional damage to a minimum as they were at all times supported during difficult and frightening periods.

The example of the older generation

Not specifically dwelt on by Putnam, it is nevertheless relevant within the context of this study. According to participants it was character-building to watch the adults' enormous efforts, commitment and skills while rebuilding their personal and professional lives. They looked ahead, not back and worked all the hours they could manage to secure their future. This gave the children a valuable perspective which helped them to cope, develop resilience and progress into capable adults.

Early mental maturity

This also played a major part in the progress towards normalisation and later success in respondents' lives. As a result of the adults being extremely busy the children were either helping them or left to their own devices while roaming freely in the woods all around them. They therefore had to learn to be self-reliant, independent and act responsibly at a young age. As a result they developed adult thinking patterns and flexibility while quite young, enabling them to adjust to life in the host country.

Cultural adjustment and integration

This progressed naturally rather than under duress, avoiding culture shock and mental strain often found in children new to a host country.

Identity

Happy to live in Germany, all but one describe their identity variously as Sudeten Germans or Bohemian Germans, a term some participants prefer. Many also acknowledge a distinct Austrian, even Viennese, influence on their personality and mannerisms.

Emotional aspects highlighted in this study will be dealt with in conjunction with the results of the Ermann Study in the next chapter.

Chapter 10

10.1 Comparisons with the Childhood in War Project, University of Munich

In this section the emotional effects on the former children from Gablonz are shown in comparison with *The Munich Childhood in War Project* led by psychiatrist Prof. Ermann which examined the long-term effects on German children under the influence of the NS time in Germany and the Second World War after 60 years. It started in 2003 and finished in 2009 and is to date the most relevant study of its kind on account of the variety, detail and depth of research. Of 15 sub-projects, one, by Andrea Bauer (2009), was found to be suitable in part for comparison with this study. Based on medical and some social research data it used a number of experience related categories common to German war children some of which also applied to the Gablonz expellees. Her research, a medical doctorate, addresses the subject of a childhood in war by examining the medical effects of war-induced experiences in relation to psychosomatic and co-morbid symptoms.

Bauer (2009, pp. 35-46) targeted a sample of 60 former war children born between 1933 and 1945 to assess levels of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder - PTSD against a spectrum of experiences as part of the total war time scenario. The results provide an overview of the range of circumstances capable of traumatising children in war. The itemised values in the Bauer study are of interest, as in the absence of other similar studies, they can be taken as being relevant in part to all German war children including those in this study.

Tables A and B below are reproduced from the Ermann Project: Bauer Doctorate, 2009, pp. 35-46. In comparison the tables including percentage values for the Gablonz expellees show plus and minus symbols to facilitate an improved overview of results compared.

10.2 Experiences of Children in War

Percentage values of 60 Respondents (Ermann – Bauer Study, 2009)

Table A

(PTSD+) indicates a higher level of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder than found in those who did not have the same experience.

78 %	experienced a trauma of their own (self-assessment)	(PTSD+)
78%	suffered deprivation during the war, the effects of hunger, cold, and poverty.	(PTSD+)
45%	witnessed a traumatic event in others	(PTSD+)
7%	had siblings who died as a result of the war.	(PTSD+)
35%	had mothers who had experienced violence and traumatisation during the war	(PTSD+)
20%	were temporarily separated from their mothers.	(PTSD+)
42%	experienced bombing raids	(PTSD+)
90 %	experienced their fathers being absent for long periods.	
35%	indicated that one parent or both were members of an NS organisation.	
30%	suffered a serious illness during the war.	
30%	had to flee their homeland.	
20 %	were expelled from their homeland	
72%	experienced aerial attacks	

In the next table the values above in the Ermann-Bauer Study (E/B), Table A, are compared with the percentages from the Gablonz group, marked by + and – symbols, depending on whether the Gablonz results were higher or lower

10.3 Results in comparison with 16 Expellee War Children from Gablonz

<p>Gablonz Respondents:</p> <p>Trauma - 18.75% (-)</p> <p>3 experienced a trauma of their own (self-assessment)</p> <p>7F39 9M38 10M34</p>	<p>E/B, Table A</p> <p>78%</p>
<p>Deprivation – 100% (+)</p> <p>All 16 suffered a broad spectrum of deprivation (the effects of hunger, cold and poverty)</p>	<p>78%</p>
<p>Witnessing Trauma in others - 31.25% (-)</p> <p>5 witnessed a traumatic event in others</p> <p>3F35 9M38 10M34 12F35 14F39</p>	<p>45%</p>
<p>Death of Siblings - 6.25% (-)</p> <p>1 7F39 lost a sibling who died as a result of the war, severe (PTSD symptoms</p>	<p>7%</p>
<p>Violence/Sexual Violence/Trauma - 6.25% (-)</p> <p>Not specifically mentioned but hinted at. 5M38: Czech grandmother experienced sexual violence by thugs while looking for her German husband in Czech camps.</p>	<p>35%</p>
<p>Temporarily separated from their mothers - 12.5% (-)</p> <p>2 7F39 8F38</p>	<p>20%</p>
<p>Prolonged absence of fathers - 87.5% (-) 14 1F40 3F35 4F38 5M38 6F40 7F39 9M38 10M34 11M39 12F35 13M39 14F39 15F39 16M33</p>	<p>90%</p>

Suffering a serious illness during the war - 19% (-) 3 1F40 2M36 7F39	30%
Fled their Homeland - 0%	30%
Suffered Expulsion from their Homeland - 100% (+) All 16	20%
Aerial attacks - 0%	72%
Experience of bombing raids – 0%	42%

10.4 The Mental Burden on the Expellees from Gablonz
Compared to the results of the Ermann-Bauer Study (E/B, Table B)

<p>Gablonz Respondents:</p> <p>Psychosomatic Symptoms - 6.25% (-) 1 7F39</p>	<p>E/B Table B</p> <p>10.2%</p>
<p>Obsessive Behaviour - 6.25% 1 7F39 (-)</p>	<p>30%</p>
<p>Feelings of Insecurity - 18.75% (-) 3 7F39, 5M38, 13M39</p>	<p>38.8%</p>
<p>Depression - 37.5% (+) 6 1F40 7F39 5M38 13M39 14F39I6M33</p> <p>The younger children seem to have been more vulnerable, only one older male, born 1933, is listed in this category</p>	<p>26.7%</p>
<p>Anxiety - 18.75% (-) 3 1F40 7F39, 14F39</p>	<p>(23.3%)</p>
<p>Considerable Anger - 18.75% (-) 3 1F40 7F39, 14F39</p>	<p>(30%)</p>
<p>Phobic Behaviour - 6.25%, (-) 1 only 7F39. A number wrote of their intense aversion to certain foods of that period and the smells they remember from the camp and the cattle waggon and smoke</p>	<p>25%</p>

Paranoid Patterns of Thinking - 0% (-)	36.7%)
Psychoticism 0% (-)	21.7%)

A second study about former German war children looking back in old age was conducted by the University of Muenster in which psychologists, psychiatrists and social scientists were involved (Grundmann, Hoffmeister, Heuft, & Schneider, 2010). Though results were mostly contextualised and rather diffuse, some values of interest were identified and compared to those in this study.

In that study of 122 respondents, participants had experienced shooting and bombing raids as children, more than half had lost a close relative and a quarter had been evacuated (kinderlandverschickt). One of the few values that lent themselves to comparison were that 32% in the Muenster Study felt themselves to be severely affected (*belastet*) by these events while 39% of Gablonzers felt *belastet* by their own specific experiences. As the sum total of their expulsion experiences were concentrated in terms of time and location and hit the children all at once this may have amplified the magnitude of their impact.

Matthias Grundmann of the Muenster Study also found that coping was made easier if suffering had been shared with others and for children born to parents higher up the social scale as well as those who had developed strong bonds with people in early childhood and felt loved.

Conclusion

As demonstrated in all testimonies, nothing seemed to have dimmed the clarity of memory recall of participants, even in the youngest ones. Their emotional reactions to the times just before, during and after the expulsions were described in great detail. There were periods when family life was sad and stressful which impacted negatively on the children's emotional well-being. As shown in Chapter 9 and 10 the expulsions had a devastating effect on their young lives. The loss of their childhood and having to put others first for the greater good of those around them often tested their emotional strength to the limit. Another issue, the suppression of individual desires and needs in childhood and later, and how it shaped individual mind-sets, is a recurring theme in German war child literature. Often those affected feel cheated by circumstances, having been prevented to fulfil their potential in a range of desired options.

The Gablonz expellees show a higher percentage value, 39%, for depression than the 26% recorded for respondents in the Ermann/Bauer project and 32% in the Muenster Study. This result according to the testimonies from all but one was counter-balanced by the satisfaction of later having succeeded in turning adversity into success.

However, their results for stress levels caused by anxiety, insecurities and anger were considerably lower than those in the Ermann/Bauer study. This is assumed in the first instance to be due to the protective factors of social capital, a crucially important feature in this respect. Secondly they were never exposed to the fear of neighbours turning on them, did not experience the stress of unexpected bombing raids and/or aerial attacks while on the move. Though some respondents had witnessed violence there was only one specific report about sexual violence affecting one grandmother. However, these events occurred in other areas of Sudetenland and beyond its borders further North and East which would account for the higher trauma values found in the cohort of former German war children in the Ermann/Bauer Study.

The University of Muenster Study's investigation on whether respondents felt "belastet", (carrying an emotional burden) produced a higher level (39%) in the Gablonz expellees compared to 32% found in the Muenster research results. Values for the Gablonzers might have been influenced upwards by the fact that they were a uniform sample of children, with each one affected, rather than respondents with a greater range of experiences from a more varied sample.

Overall the values in the tables show that ex-Gablonzers were affected to a lesser degree by their experiences than respondents in the Ermann/Bauer study. In addition to the many attractions of their host area the positive and protective influence of the family unit and social capital played a decisive role before and during the period of their expulsion. Thereafter it was a significant factor in respondents' mental and physical recovery during the post-war years in Neugablonz.

Final Conclusion

History and Politics, Part 1

After new states desiring to be nation-states were created at the Paris Peace Conferences of 1918-1919 some 25 million people became ethnic minorities. After 1918 over 3 million former Bohemian German-speakers, later referred to as Sudeten Germans, suddenly found themselves included as a minority in the new state of Czechoslovakia. That change of the old order in Central Europe had a profound effect on relations between Czechs and Germans, co-citizens of old within the historic boundaries of the Kingdom of Bohemia. The German expulsions from Czechoslovakia, the end-phase of a long and formerly mainly peaceful inter-ethnic relationship, had a life-defining effect on the group of Sudeten German expellee respondents who contributed their testimonies to this study. They are survivors from the Northern Bohemian area of Gablonz and its surroundings, whose life-stories were researched from early childhood into old-age. The aim was to establish an authentic link between Czech-German Bohemian and Sudeten history, how it is remembered by a group of German war children, and how their lives were influenced by it.

In an integrated approach the construction of the questionnaires targeted many aspects of interest in respect of history as well as war child issues as experienced and remembered by the former Sudeten German war children. While focusing on the initial research for this War Child Study, the author realised that their testimony content would not be just about them and their reactions to their disrupted lives through uprooting, displacement and resettlement. It became clear that the material would also allow insight into the complex pre-1945 Czech-German history and politics of the region. The subsequent evaluation and analysis turned out to be a much more complicated task than expected as the perspective of the former Sudeten war children needed to be compared with Czech and international perceptions of their history and politics.

Part of the thesis attempted to make understanding Bohemian and later Czechoslovak history and politics a less complex undertaking by highlighting why to this day the importance of certain periods and dates is assessed quite differently by Czechs and Germans. Whenever Czech-German matters are under scrutiny going back to the periods in question, there is still a noticeable lack of comprehension on each side of what matters most to the other party. This is evident in the public media on the Continent and even at academic conferences. Many aspects are sensitive and seen as contentious and frequently what is met with approval by one side is disapproved of by the other. The following outline provides a useful time line and an evaluation of the difference in reactions between Czechs and Germans to key historical events.

A characteristic of the subject area, the split in perception started to develop in *the early 19th century* when Czechs and Germans increasingly looked at their joint Bohemian history through different lenses. One of the reasons for the widening rift developing between Bohemian Czechs and Germans was a dispute which arose because of Czech nationalists' territorial claims to the German inhabited borderlands. In 1918 the creation of Czechoslovakia resulted in a high for the Czechs but the incorporation of the German borderlands by military means in 1919 was seen as aggression and proved to be a very low point for the Germans. The years 1918/1919 are consequently etched into the Sudeten German collective memory as a great mistake politically and historically while it was the culmination of fulfilling the dreams of Czech nationalists. The new government was perceived as pursuing a Czech agenda irrespective of issues judged important by the Germans. "Munich", 20 years later, was seen as an absolute disaster by the Czechs, but preferable to being ruled by Prague for most German-speakers. The subsequent chain of events up to 1945 left many Czechs with feelings of great antipathy against their German co-citizens whose expulsion and diaspora in 1945/1946 finally ended the chapter of two talented and capable populations having shared the same country since the Middle Ages.

In a novel approach the decision to incorporate history research of considerable breadth and depth into this project has added a valuable dimension to it, as previously unknown or ignored aspects of Bohemian/Sudeten life were discovered from literary sources and respondents' testimonies. Rather than repeat the main findings in respect of history and politics, the contents of Chapters 1-5, with a conclusion following each one, provide the information asked for in the key research question for Part 1 of the thesis: *What were the historico-political root-causes of the 20th century Czech German ethnic conflict in Czechoslovakia? How could a political situation develop, where the only solution considered desirable was the expulsion, 1945-48, of approximately 3.5 million Bohemian German-speakers from their ancestral homelands?*

The War Child Study, Part 2

The data gained from the questionnaires, probing memories of the personal and emotional effects of history and politics as experienced by respondents, demonstrate the life-long impact of the expulsions.

As even the oldest German respondents were pre-school children in 1938, the data gained from their eyewitness testimonies do not cover matters in respect of Konrad Henlein, his nationalist movement or the Annexation. In fact they learnt more in this respect from the author than the other way round.

As to the pre-war history of Czech-German affairs, their families' grievances as described in the German war children's testimonies, based on memories of comments by the grandparents' and parents' generation, compare almost exactly to the relevant sections listed in Part 1.

Questions on the pre-war identity of their Altoesterreicher/Austrian Bohemian grandparents demonstrated a great fondness for the times of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The inter-war identity of the next generation, the children's parents, is described as "German", which does not provide any insight into their political leanings. However, the Bohemian/Sudeten Germans had always been loyal to their locality and patriotic in respect of their ancient and historic Bohemian homelands. It should therefore not be assumed, as is frequently the case in an often repeated cliché that the majority of Henlein supporters had suddenly acquired Pan-German Nazi mind-sets, supporting what Hitler and Nazism stood for. Feedback data contain information on what had conditioned the mind-sets and judgements of the older generation as to what it meant to be German as citizens of inter-war Czechoslovakia. As shown in Part 1, after 1918 the Czechoslovak government's attitudes towards them was perceived as biased and unhelpful and their support for Henlein was seen as a direct consequence of the political circumstances of the 1930s. Testimonies also mentioned the families' loyalty and attachment to their Bohemian home region as well as the difficult economic circumstances in pre-Annexation Sudetenland which made becoming a part of Germany a seemingly desirable option. Apart from objecting to radical Czech nationalism no antipathy against Czechs was found in the data about the Czech-German co-citizenship before 1945. It appears that the prime motivation in most Sudeten German minds before the Annexation was more to do with Bohemian patriotism, a desire for a national and economic solution for their German borderland homelands and trying to resist czechification. Would they have wanted to facilitate the implementation of a Pan-German Nazi ideology in line with Hitler's plans? They have certainly been accused of that many times.

Participants had few general memories of the early war years which allowed glimpses of how the German families' coped with Nazi influence on their lives, however, as memory retention is age related, the quality of research data increased towards 1945. Detailed recollections enabled them to chronicle events towards the end phase of the war in great detail. Vivid descriptions were supplied of the pre-expulsion period and their families' incomprehension and distress once it had become clear what lay in store for the German population. The next phase, being dispossessed and forced from their homes into a holding camp by an official order was even more upsetting, only to be followed by being transported out of the country under rough conditions to an uncertain future.

What came through strongly in both the Czech and German testimonies was that the relationship between Czechs and Germans in Gablonz, town and District, was peaceful until 1945, when Czech nationalists and Communist inspired agitators from outside poured in and created havoc. Before then people, irrespective of ethnicity, had continued to respect one another as part of a community with all the elements of social capital present, which had developed from a tradition of cooperation in both the working and private sphere of their lives. Jan Bitman, the Czech local historian, somewhat older than the German respondents, confirmed that civic peace between the two ethnic groups was unaffected by the pre-war

activities of Heinlein supporters such as rallies during the 1930s which also took place in Gablonz. One of the Czech respondents wrote he was curious to see what was going on and sometimes joined the crowds without suffering negative consequences.

Both the history research from secondary sources and the data from the war child study resulted in specific and in some cases surprising new information on issues where over the years interpretations had followed persistent clichés and stereotypes. The Czech participants' testimonies repeated some stereotypes still present in Czech public opinion. In their view the Germans wanted out of Czechoslovakia because they wished to be part of a hegemonic Empire planning to dominate all of Europe. The Sudeten Germans have always contested this explanation, stressing they had no quarrel with the Czechs as such but objected to their government's restrictive policies in relation to a wide range of issues which, as is demonstrated in this thesis, were negatively affecting their lives.

Another commonly held belief is based on the impression that civic unrest in the late 1930s was occurring in much of Sudetenland. As shown, it did not happen in Gablonz and because there is also some anecdotal evidence of continuing nationally indifferent behaviour in other areas, one is left wondering whether the number of locations affected was significant in respect of the region as a whole. More research would help to shed light on this issue.

The data supplied by the German respondents vividly portray the route their life-histories followed before and after they were uprooted from their homes in Sudetenland as children. The thesis demonstrates how their families and they themselves managed to overcome despair, initial poverty, and deprivation and turned early adversity into success within a relatively short time. This was in part due to the economic measures of the post-war German Government which facilitated the integration of refugees and expellees. However, a major factor in the expellee families' achievements and their and their children's resilience was that their lives were supported by the presence of social capital, first in the community of Gablonz and after 1945/1946 in Neugablonz. It proved an essential element in their recovery from very difficult times which otherwise might have crushed them both physically and mentally.

Since refugee and expulsion scenarios continue to occur to this day it would be interesting whether mainly positive or negative outcomes in any present or future studies could be researched according to Putnam's markers of social capital.

It would have been easier and more straightforward to make this interdisciplinary study either a history project or a purely scientific investigation into the physical and mental challenges faced by children forcibly uprooted from the homes and environment of their childhood. However, though the researcher wished to give the dwindling group of surviving Sudeten German expellees a voice, the historical and political background behind the German expulsions from Czechoslovakia could not be dealt with just in passing. This meant that the work for the

constantly expanding history and politics section in Part 1 of the study soon turned into a somewhat problematic task. Findings could not be based on international judgements alone, nor entirely on the German or Czech respondents' perspectives on their historiographies. To provide a balanced picture, if that is ever possible, careful scrutiny of research sources and a sensitive approach in the navigation of contentious aspects and conflicting interpretations turned out to be as important as the actual research in all its multi-faceted and multi-themed plurality. With new understandings and new scepticism concerning claims about the past an interesting era is opening up beckoning researchers to look through new windows at Central and Eastern European history.

If the author's determined efforts to deal with the difficult subject of the Sudeten expulsions can be regarded as a contribution of value in the field, and method and findings amount to the academic strengths expected, the study should be an incentive for future engagement with War Child issues.

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¹⁹ According to the "Harvard Guide to Using Sources", in APA style the retrieval date of access to electronic sources should only be included if the content is likely to *change* over time.
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Map: German population density (Census1930):

http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/~pv/munich/maps/german_density_w1383.gif

Map: Hitlers demands:

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Testimonies from the following respondents:

16 Germans - the Neugablonz core group

8 Germans - from Schwaebisch Gmuend

6 Czechs from Jablonec

Associations: Old Gablonz and District: The Municipal Archive:Jablonec.

Associations (post-war): Neugablonz Archive: Neugablonz,

Letters,Documents, Photographs

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Radio Prague: German

<http://www.radio.cz/de>

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum online

<http://www.ushmm.org/information>

AJR the Association of Jewish Refugees; Kindertransport

<http://www.ajr.org.uk/kindersurvey>

German War Child websites - Kriegskinder

<http://www.dhm.de>

<http://www.kriegskindheit.de>

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LeMO Lebendiges Museum Online

www.dhm.de/lemo/

Joint project: Deutsches Historisches Museum (DHM), Berlin, with Haus der Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Bonn. Excellent online research resource on German History from the middle of the 19th century to the present.

Czechoslovakia under Nazi Occupation:

Everyday life: <http://www.dhm.de/lemo/html/nazi/alltagsleben/index.html>

Hitler Jugend <http://www.dhm.de/lemo/html/nazi/organisationen/jugend/index.html>

Collective memory http://www.dhm.de/lemo/forum/kollektives_gedaechtnis/index.html

Hitler youth: http://www.dhm.de/lemo/forum/kollektives_gedaechtnis/040/index.html

BdM: http://www.dhm.de/lemo/forum/kollektives_gedaechtnis/086/index.html

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Ruestung NS-Regime

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Die Rüstungsindustrie der Tschechischen Republik

<http://www.bundesheer.at/truppendienst/ausgaben/artikel.php?id=298> retrieved 30 May 2013 (Truppen)

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militaerarchiv@barch.bund.de

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APPENDIX

The Associational Life of Gablonz

The rapid expansion of Gablonz during the 19th century went hand in hand with the development of a lively social, educational and cultural scene, connected to a wide range of activities. Research of the societies and clubs of Old Gablonz reflects the inhabitants' energy on several fronts.

Under the Habsburgs the establishment of clubs had been forbidden by law until 1867, as they were suspected of providing a platform to incite subversive political activities. Associations tolerated were the Schuetzenverein of Gablonz, the organisation of the local group of hunters (1761), the Gablonz Association of Veterans (1823), the Singing Group, Liederkranz (Song Circle) of 1846 and the Gablonz Turnverein (Gymnastics Organisation) of 1862. As soon as the law was repealed a wave of new societies were officially registered. (Associations and Clubs, Vereine. Gablonz. Register-Kataster, Jablonec nad Nisou). The Gablonz Saengerbund (Singing Organisation) of 1867 was one of the first ones to be registered (Associations and Clubs, Vereine, Neugablonz, Isergebirgs-Museum: Archive).

Czech patriotic associations were started from the early 1870s, at a time when approximately 45000 Germans and 500 Czechs lived and worked in the District of Gablonz (Stuetz, & Zenkner, 1992, pp. 177-178). Their aim was to safeguard Czech rights and in line with growing patriotism to expand Czech influence in the German areas.

Jan Kašpar, director of the Archive of Jablonec nad Nisou and author of a guide through the history of Jablonec nad Nisou provides an outline of the development of Czech community life in pre-1914 Gablonz. In 1870 the association Česká beseda was founded; here plays were performed, books could be borrowed and political meetings were held. In 1889 the first Czech school was opened in Gablonz, a result of the efforts of the Ústřední matice školská (Czech schools association). In the same year the local branch of Národní jednota severočeská (National union of Northern Bohemia) was established, followed by the sports association Sokol in 1894, both associations also actively promoting Czech nationalist objectives. The national support association, Havlíček, was founded in 1904 and in 1909 the Národní dům (National House) was opened, a hub of social and cultural activity. In the Austrian Census of 1910, 29,521 inhabitants in the town of Gablonz are shown to be German, 2,358 were Czechs (Kašpar, 2006, p. 31, p. 35).

The Germans on the other hand founded Schutzvereine (protection societies) intended to safeguard their cultural heritage and political priorities. The most important were the local branch of the Schulverein (schools association) 1880, post-1918 renamed Kulturverband

(cultural association), financially supporting German schools in the region, the Union of Germans in Northern Bohemia (1889), and Bund der Deutschen in Boehmen (1894). These associations had a broad base of supporters who volunteered for fundraising activities, offered their services as officers and considered it to be an honour to be involved to preserve Germaness. Members came from a German orientated, but nevertheless wide spectrum of political opinion. To some "German" would mean German Bohemian, part of the Germans of Austria, others would have a pan-German outlook. The Deutscher Turnverein Jahn, was an example, a gymnastics association following the father of gymnastics, Turnvater Jahn's ideas of physical training leading to toughness and excellence and to be of service to the German nation as a whole. This was later to become the inspiration for Konrad Henlein and his movement.

The majority of the 308 unions, societies, associations and clubs of Gablonz were founded before 1914; they reflect the social energy of the population of the town before political events overtook the region and changed it forever. Only 18 new ones were established after 1920.

In 1895, at a time when the town had less than 20,000 inhabitants, fundraising efforts started to build a theatre. On 21 September 1907 a grand opening ceremony of the *Theatre of Gablonz*, an impressive building took place and from then on operas, operettas, concerts and plays were performed to much acclaim by an appreciative public. Between 1918 and 1938 altogether 1407 performances took place with tickets sold to a multi-cultural and multilingual audience of 525,439 people, mainly Germans, Czechs and Jews.

Several *Amateur Dramatic Societies* were in existence by 1895. Two of them, the Theater Dilettanten Club of Gablonz, and another one from Marienberg had started to build an open air venue before 1914 for performances in an attractive woodland setting. Activities were restarted in the early 1920s and continued to delight audiences until the last season in 1944. In spite of being in the mountains, some walking distance away from the town, archive pictures show hundreds of people enjoying the performances.

Singing and Music were one of the most active branches of community life which still continues in Neugablonz. From 1846 about 145 to 150 Singvereine (singing societies, choirs) were registered in the whole district, 12 in Gablonz itself. Apart from the Theatre Orchestra there existed several groups performing instrumental music, with concerts taking place in various venues, also in open air locations. On certain occasions some or all groups would combine, for instance in a performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony (Stuetz, & Zenkner, 1992, p. 186). Last not least the local dance bands need a mention since they were also very popular providing light entertainment.

The Library. In 1866 the old town hall was extended to house an extensive public library for the town and to supplement smaller branches in the country areas of the surrounding district, helping to support a wide range of cultural and educational activities. The library had desks for

60 readers, was open all day, offered 20 daily papers, 100 magazines and reports on all areas of interest, with 40,000 items loaned annually.

Adult Education (Volkshochschule) grew out of the Ortsbildungsausschüssen (local education committees) in Gablonz and the villages and small towns in the mountains which provided a wide-ranging programme of educational and vocational courses as well as lectures, trips, singing practice and musical instruction, concerts and cultural events.

Professional and vocational Associations and Clubs. There were societies, clubs and associations for every professional and employment category as well as for skilled and unskilled workers, male and female, which in many cases also provided educational opportunities. For employees in the marketing and export sectors the Cercle Polyglotte and English Club (1880) provided a platform for instruction and practice in language skills.

Love of Nature, was catered for in mountaineering and hiking clubs to mention just three, the Gablonz branch of the Austrian Alpine Club (1903), and its German counterpart, Deutscher Gebirgsverein (German mountaineering association) of 1914 and the Wandervoegel, (1913), an organisation with a German nationalist message for young people who would take part in hiking, camping and singing led by people with an expressly German nationalist agenda.

Jewish societies were represented by the Israelitischer Kultusverein (Israeli cultural society) of 1874, and the Temple (synagogue) Choir of 1902 which was often joined by singers from other local societies in joint performances and vice versa. The Zionist association, Theodor Herzl, followed in 1908, with the Juedischer Wanderbund, Blau-weiss' (the Jewish hiking club, blue and white) founded in 1920. Many non-national and secular Jews, an integrated part of Gablonz society since Imperial times, would also have been represented as members and officers of non Jewish German or Czech societies and clubs such as professional associations. As referred to previously, a Jewish person, Dr. Adler, was for many years the respected chairman of the Gablonz German Schulverein (schools association) founded in 1880 and very much involved in the protection of German culture and everything connected with it. However, between 1881 and 1901, the so-called anti-Jewish Arierparagraph (Aryan clause), was introduced in the statutes of many sporting and gymnastics clubs and other associations, (Associations and Clubs, Vereine, Gablonz, Isergebirgs Museum, 3 / 4.3).

Among other categories explored, two German societies for Progress (1894, 1913) were found, as well as an Association of Free-Thinkers (1903), and a Society of Proletarian Free Thinkers (1936).

Life in Gablonz does not appear to have been just work. Between 1870 and 1923 no less than 18 societies were established with the express purpose of celebrating good living and conviviality, with food, drink and "Gemuetlichkeit" (comfortable surroundings) central to their

purpose. They, along with the Smokers' Club (1921) as well as the Pipe Smokers' Club (1901) were opposed by the Society for Abstinence (1902), and the Opponents of Tobacco (1925).

The Gablonz of old had been a vibrant and prosperous town. The exporters in particular had become rich through global trade with a lifestyle reflecting their wealth. This was used in part to build impressive mansions, making the town in places look similar to Vienna or Paris. However, it was also considered a badge of honour to donate large sums of money to support cultural, educational and civic initiatives (Roessler, 1979, p. 30), another sign of deep commitment to the town and district. The Gablonzers of old planned, organised built and paid for cultural and sporting establishments, parks and walking trails, supported schools and other educational institutions as well as investing in the Arts and Sciences. In those days Gablonz was regarded as a major centre of culture, much more so than other comparable provincial Bohemian towns.

After the Annexation the Nazis drastically curtailed the activities of all societies, as they did not conform to Reich German specifications, a source of dismay and annoyance to the Sudeten German population. Everything had to be subordinate to Reich directives which killed off the old free spirit which had created and sustained the clubs and associations of old Gablonz.

Of the post-war records for Neugablonz only the register for 1964 could be found showing 43 associations, clubs and societies active in cultural, language, music, sports artistic and other pursuits. At present the number stands at 34 (Associations and Clubs - Vereine, Neugablonz.).

METHODOLOGY (extension)

This inter-disciplinary War Child study has combined research in two disciplines, History and the Social Sciences to explain the root causes of the German Expulsions from Czechoslovakia and their effect on respondents' lives.

The German core-group recruited for this War Child study had retained vivid recollections of their war-time experiences. All could remember events before, during and after the expulsions in detail, which increased towards 1945 as they were older by then. Children's memories, however, retain what is important to them, which did not include many details of the political scenario during their early childhood. The Czech testimonies, on the other hand, filled in some historico-political gaps of the realities of their lives up to 1945. The German participants provided a wealth of material in relation to their own feelings about how they perceived life before, during and after their removal from Northern Bohemia and as such provided valuable insights in respect of social research.

Below is an outline of the framework within which this study was conducted.

1. History Research: History as witnessed and remembered by participants.

Questionnaire 1: Written testimony. 12 questions and stimuli

Do data compare to the information provided in Chapters 3-5?

Questionnaire 3: 10 further stimuli and follow-on interview questions supplementing Questionnaire 1 about participants' recollections of their parents' and grandparents' reactions to Czech policies after the creation of the new state of Czechoslovakia, before and after the Annexation and during the Second World War?

It was hoped to gauge the mid-set of the German adult population during that period via the testimonies of the children. As expected, only patchy feedback was forthcoming, as even the oldest participants were only of pre-school age in 1938.

2. Social Research: The Effects of Displacement

Questionnaire 2: Written testimony

30 questions and stimuli about the *Effects of Displacement* on the core-group.

Questionnaire 4: 26 follow on interview questions and stimuli

Topics for Questionnaires 1-4

As shown in the Table: *The Impact of History on Research Participants' lives*.

Topics were generated by the historical context underlying respondents' lives. Table cells on the left provide the background for narrative stimuli and questions in the adjoining cells on the right.

Research targets

Strand 1: How far do recollections of the history experienced by respondents correspond with the historiography as presented in Chapters 3-5 in comparison with some of the views expressed by historians about the 1930s and 1940s?

Strand 2: Are there any noticeable life-long effects on the former war-children and are respondents aware of them? No definite benchmarks exist to date to help categorise the long-term effects on former child war victims, self-assessment by respondents will be the only guide.

Data Sources: Memories referring to crucial periods in respondents' life-history.

7 life-stations, set against the history of the time and social aspects affecting respondents as children and adolescents are the structural framework for the narrative stimuli and questions in Questionnaires 1-4

Respondents' answers, resulting from memories and impressions retained, were mostly summarised and contextualised and only occasionally reproduced as per original. For evaluation and analyses results were thematically categorised and values entered into tables for each one of 16 individuals in the core-group. This facilitated transparency in respect of questionnaire answers and which respondents supplied them, allowing in-depth scrutiny as well as cross-case comparisons.

The Historical Context (Part 1)

Chapters 3-5 provide an in-depth analysis of the historical forces and political vectors which ultimately became the determining factors in the childhood experiences and later lives of the Sudeten German children before, during and after their expulsion

The overarching research question for this section is:

What were the historico-political root-causes of the 20th century Czech German ethnic conflict in Czechoslovakia? How could a political situation develop, where the only solution considered desirable was the expulsion, 1945-48, of approximately 3.5 million Bohemian German-speakers from their ancestral homelands?

Chapter 3 provides an in-depth overview of Sudeten issues, and the underlying historical and political forces which shaped the destiny of Czechoslovakia and its former pre-1945 German population. It traces how the original national indifference of the people of the former Kingdom of Bohemia, an ethnically diverse yet also very mixed group, was gradually being influenced by the rise of nationalism during the 19th and early 20th century.

Changes after the collapse of the Habsburg Empire are explained and how the creation of the new nation state, Czechoslovakia, in 1918, affected the demographic balance within its new borders. Pointing to the difficulties faced by the new regime during the inter-war years, and the growing nationalist reaction of the German minority, the growth of Sudeten German nationalism is charted in all its phases. It peaked in the late 1930s under the leadership of Konrad Henlein resulting in 1938 in the Sudeten Crisis, "Munich" and the subsequent Annexation of Sudetenland by Germany. This was swiftly followed by the establishment of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.

The impact of the Nazi regime on the Czechs and Bohemian Jews and its harshness is described as well as the role of its key figures Reinhardt Heydrich and Karl Hermann Frank. Also shown are the consequences of the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 for Czechoslovakia, when its resources and workforce were used for the German war effort. Finally a description of the increasingly desperate situation of the German population after Germany's collapse in 1945 points to their imminent fate of being forcibly removed from their old homelands.

Chapter 4 deals with events after the return of President Beneš and his political colleagues from exile to Czechoslovakia. Speeches and the political framework for the expulsions of the Germans from the country, planned during the war years, gave the impending German and

Hungarian expulsions a semblance of legitimacy, reinforced by the decisions reached by the Allies at the Conference of Potsdam.

Retributive justice and expropriation during the “wild” and “orderly and humane” expulsions, as well as resettlement of the depopulated areas, helped to make Czechoslovakia into a supposedly mono-ethnic Slavic Czech country only to fall under Communist rule from 1948 until 1989. After “the velvet divorce” from its partner Slovakia, the area of the former Bohemian Kingdom was renamed “Czech Republic” in 1993, it has now taken its place as a full member of the European Union which it joined in 2004.

Chapter 5 shows how very much the history and traditions of life and work in pre-war Gablonz shaped and underpinned the German expellees’ existence in the newly established post-war town Neugablonz.

The history of Gablonz is traced from the early beginnings of its glass ware and paste-jewellery production in the 19th century, through the inter-war and war years, and its contraction after the end of the Second World War. The role of the Jews and their importance as merchants and exporters is emphasised as well as their pivotal influence in the worldwide promotion and global success of the products. Without their know-how, organisation and marketing ability Gablonz wares would never have had the spectacular success they achieved, originating as they did in a rather out of the way, little known mountainous corner of Northern Bohemia.

Also explained is the growth of the Czech working population which happened in parallel with the rapid expansion of the industrial output of the town of Gablonz and its surrounding villages, and soon their presence found expression in the creation of Czech clubs and associations. These in addition to the large number of German societies, demonstrate the vitality of community life in old Gablonz, which peaked pre-First World War but nevertheless continued until the outbreak of the Second World War.

The remarkably integrated society and highly developed community spirit of all who earned their living from Gablonz industries was torn apart after the end of the last war, with the Germans’ ethnic and cultural foot-print officially extinguished during Communist times. The resettlement of participants’ expellee families in post-war Bavaria was accompanied by much hardship, but eventually turned into a success story. It was achieved through sheer hard work, refusing to be beaten and a remarkably enterprising mind-set, a legacy of their previous positive attitudes in former Gablonz. The legacy of the Gablonz of old, the skills and knowledge of the expellees as well as their willingness to cooperate within their community helped to make the creation of Neugablonz a reality.

The Memory Study (Part 2)

Memories

Memory is a concept full of problematic facets which affects how one looks at the result of human recollections. It was not within the remit of this project to highlight medical aspects or interpret psychological manifestations found in my respondents' testimonies though they will be recorded and put into their historical context. Memory here is only used as a tool, albeit a flawed one, to gain access to information about a specific part of contemporary Central European history. Using memory as an instrument for this purpose means one has to acknowledge that there are several versions of Bohemian and later Czechoslovak history: Czech-Nationalist, Czech-Communist, Czech post-1989, Jewish, Mainstream German-Austrian, Mainstream German Sudeten interpretations as well as Right-wing ones by some representatives of the expellee associations.

Research Targets

What can still be found out via the memories of Sudeten war children, born 1933 – 40 in Gablonz (Jablonec-nad-Nisou), Northern Bohemia? How and what will this study contribute to our understanding of Central European contemporary history?

The research questions to be explored in this section are:

How do the former Sudeten German war children remember the times before, during and after their families' expulsion?

Two main lines of enquiry will be pursued here:

- a. **History:** How do respondents remember *their* experiences in relation to pre-1945 history? Do their answers as time-witnesses correspond with the history and political developments described in Part 1? Questionnaires 1 and 3 probe these issues.
- b. **The Human Dimension** of that history is dealt with in Questionnaires 2 and 4: What were the effects on respondents, who were children at the time before, during and after their enforced removal? Called "odsun" in Czech, meaning resettlement, this is a term which linguistically does not take account of the purpose of the operation which would nowadays be described as ethnic cleansing.

Social Science Criteria

Method

Data Source: testimonies from 3 groups of respondents, a total of 30 participants

The data for this section of the project were collected from the testimonies of the following groups of research participants:

16 German respondents from Neugablonz, referred to as the core-group
(4 German questionnaires)

8 additional German research participants from Schwaebisch-Gmuend
(1 further German questionnaire)

6 additional Czech respondents
(1 Czech questionnaire with answers translated into English to supplement the information provided by the German respondents,)

Core-group: 16 German research participants, born between 1933 – 1940 in Gablonz an der Neisse (Jablonec nad Nisou) in northern Bohemia, Czechoslovakia. Expelled with their families from Czechoslovakia as children in 1945-46, they are now residents in and around Kaufbeuren-Neugablonz, Bavaria, Germany. They dealt with 2 main standardised questionnaires (1 and 2) which were supplemented by 2 shorter ones (3 and 4) during a one hour long conversational interview.

They came forward spontaneously as a result of an advert which a German inhabitant of Neugablonz had put into a local paper. Initially eight persons offered their cooperation. The remaining eight were recruited via what is known as the “snowball” method, where relations, friends and acquaintances became interested and wished to become involved. Currently in their mid-seventies to early eighties they are an active, confident group of people, who all still live in their own homes. They freely volunteered to talk and write about their initially difficult life-histories,

Sub-Group 1: 8 German participants from Schwaebisch Gmuend, Baden-Wuerttemberg, also born in Gablonz, having heard about the project, volunteered their help. It was probed whether they were able to provide answers to additional questions such as the effect of the Henlein movement and the nature of the coexistence between Czechs and Germans during the occupation by the Reich.

Sub-Group 2: Czech Respondents. After much effort by the Cultural Office in Jablonec nad Nisou 6 Czech participants, five contemporaries of the German respondents and one born post-war, still living in Jablonec/Gablonz were eventually sourced. They supplied written testimony about their memories of the time before and during the German occupation to the time when their German co-citizens had to leave and afterwards. They conveyed details which the German core-group was not been to supply.

One respondent in particular, Jan Bitman (1JB), the local bi-lingual historian and a published author, has substantially contributed to the Czech part of this research. He generously supplied dossiers of his work which spans many decades and was always willing to answer questions, and helped to clarify issues as they arose.

Sample: Why Gablonz?

Almost ideal sample criteria are fulfilled in this study. It focuses on members of a homogenous population sample, Sudeten German war children from the same area, Gablonz, of the same age range, whose families, after expulsion settled as a group of about 20,000 in the same place in post-war Germany and called it Neugablonz.

There the glass industries left behind were restarted almost immediately, providing employment and eventually leading to post-war prosperity. Based on an authentic source, eyewitness testimonies, we are able to follow respondents on their journey through life from childhood to old age and make comparisons with the historiography surrounding the Sudeten expulsions and war child issues involving the effects of displacement.

Bias

As respondents are a self-selected group, it could be argued that this sets them apart from other members of their cohort, representing an inherent bias as self-selection does not produce a random sample.

Researcher and respondents' perspective

As a war-child, born and educated in Vienna, the researcher has always been aware of the expulsion of the former Bohemian Germans from Czechoslovakia after 1945. This research is the result of wishing to understand fully how the concept of ethnic cleansing became an accepted solution for the political difficulties between two ethnic groups which had throughout most of their joint history cooperated in a productive and peaceful manner.

Being close enough to events after the end of the Second World War to acquire a more profound knowledge than younger researchers can offer, living and working in Britain during her adult life has provided distance, both in time and geography. In the quest to pursue this research with objectivity, diligence and integrity, a great many German sources, much Czech secondary literature and primary sources (Meissner Chronik, Associations/Vereins Kataster) and works of internationally renowned British and American academics and intellectuals have been consulted.

In line with social research practice and the use of qualitative methods the perspective of the German and Czech respondents has also been taken account of.

In the social sciences researcher perspective is important as well as self scrutiny. However, the concept of “critical distance” is different from what is expected of historians. In social research the interviewer- researcher-respondent relationship is meant to be as optimal as possible for best data accessibility. The less the cultural and ethnic background differs between them, the higher the chances of a good research outcome (Monette, D. R., Sullivan, T. J. & DeJong, C. R., 2014, pp. 181-182). The researcher’s background, understanding and interest in their history was appreciated by all respondents cooperating in this study, including the Czechs. This enhanced the quality of the researcher – respondent relationship, and added to participants’ willingness to provide relevant testimony.

The Oral History research

Best practice and high ethical standards were maintained throughout the Oral History research as stipulated in the Principles and Standards of the Oral History Association (Oral history, 2002) The following excerpts of stipulations are relevant in this study and were met in full.

Interviewers should achieve a balance between the objectives of the Project and the perspectives of the interviewees.

Interviewees should be selected based on the relevance of their experiences to the subject at hand while interviewers should be grounded in the background of the persons being interviewed. They should provide complete documentation of their preparation and methods, details of which were submitted at the time of Transfer to PhD and in the application to the Ethics Committee and subsequently approved.

Interviewers should be sensitive to the communities from which they have collected oral histories, taking care not to reinforce thoughtless stereotypes.

The rights of interviewees to refuse to discuss certain subjects must be respected.

The Oral History Association. (2002). *Principles and Standards of the Oral History Association*
http://omega.dickinson.edu/organizations/oha/pub_eg.html#Principles%20and%20Standards

The guidelines by the Ethics Committee of Reading University were fully taken account of and strictly adhered to

Collection of Data from the Core Group

Choice of Tools : Questionnaires

The questionnaires explored the historic times respondents witnessed and the life-long impact of those periods on them. These contained a mixture of open questions as well as stimuli for a semi-structured narrative

Questionnaires 1 and 2 were completed in writing and returned to me from Germany.

Questionnaires 3 and 4 followed up information contained in the written testimony, and were completed during a one hour long interview which took place during a visit to Kaufbeuren-Neugablonz from 7 to 14 November, 2011. Each sheet was checked by the respondent and signed by him/her.

Testimony for Questionnaire 1 (*History and Politics*) was supplemented by Questionnaire 3
Testimony for Questionnaire 2 (*The Human Dimension*) was supplemented by Questionnaire 4

What were the main markers in the German respondents' childhoods and beyond? Participants' lives passed from a normal childhood in their ancestral home environment in Northern Bohemia through the deprivations of the war years to losing everything they held dear due to the process of their families' expropriation. They then became subject to the harsh conditions of expulsion, arriving in and having to adapt to life in a new unfamiliar area, which they were expected to accept as their new home region, while having to integrate and morph into citizens of the host region.

These circumstances form the basis for the exploration of the sociological aspects of emotional effects resulting from the displacement and disruption of respondents' early lives. It was an exceptional privilege to get eye-witness testimony and cooperation from participants with first-

hand experience of their history of Northern Bohemia before 1945 and thereafter in post-war Germany, before they too become part of it.

Analysis and evaluation

History

How do the former War Children remember the historical times they experienced?

Memories of the politics and history experienced? (Questionnaires 1 and 3)

1. How did they register and judge the historic times they lived through?
2. What do the children remember of their families' inter-war outlook?
3. Do their impressions reflect the official interpretation of Sudeten history as promoted by the "Landsmannschaften" (expellee associations)?
4. Identities? Changes?

Identity issues will be probed and those on *political orientation and party allegiances* (of the parents and grandparents, pre-war and up to 1945). However, respondents were children at the time with limited capacity to judge political issues involving the parent and grandparent generation.

Another obstacle to gaining relevant information here are the strict guidelines of the Ethics Committee of Reading University which do not allow intrusive questions capable of upsetting respondents. However, their memories still provide some insight into the opinions, attitudes and actions of their Sudeten parents and grandparents during a time of German nationalism and political upheaval as well as before, during and after the expulsions and beyond. The Czechs' were invited to provide their version of the same period and their answers filled in gaps in the German testimonies.

Triangulation – History (Research Strand 1) is achieved through three factors:

1. Historical information contained in chapters 3-5 (Part 1), followed by:
2. Respondents' answers to questionnaires 1-4
3. Final comparison and evaluation with the two lines of enquiry (above), either corroborating results or not. Also referring to additional primary support material (letters, photos and other documents)

Social Research

What was the Human Cost to children of the displaced families from Gablonz?

Questions here are of a more personal nature, but in complete accordance with the ethical requirements for this project, passed as such by the University of Reading Ethics Committee.

1. What were the effects of events on participants personally before, during and after their expulsion?
2. What shaped the personalities of participants prior to the enforced disruption in their lives? Were there noticeable changes afterwards?
3. What were the effects on the children of the abrupt end of their childhood and their families' struggle thereafter?
4. How did they fare post-childhood as adolescents, in adulthood and old age?
5. What were the sources of their strength and endurance in adverse conditions?
6. Where can the origins of post-war energy and productivity be found?
7. How do they judge their circumstances then and now? What lies behind the post-war normality in the behaviour of these former war children? How do they judge the effects of what they had to experience and witness on themselves and their families?
8. How did the transformation from victims of expulsion to successful people come about? What were the sources of their resilience?
9. Are there noticeable trans-generational consequences of their initially blighted lives?

(The answers to these questions will be found in the chapters of Part 2 of this study)

German War child studies: Research approaches

Below is a summary of some of the major projects undertaken in Germany during the last 20 years.

1. **Medical, psychiatric, psychological, psycho-therapeutic research**

Interpretations and judgements are made based on mental or physical health issues as a result of patients' war child past (Liebertz, Franz & Schepank, 2011).. A subsection of another study, *The Ermann Project* (Bauer, 2009) offers some potential for comparisons with this study.

2. **Social Research in cooperation with specialists in the medical professions.**

The problems here are the quite diverse perceptions of interviewees re. their war time experiences (Grundmann, Hoffmeister & Knoth, 2009) and when looking back in old age (Grundmann, M., Hoffmeister, D., Heuft G., & Schneider G. (2010). This makes comparisons with this study difficult.

3. **Social Research on its own**

Here researchers are mainly working on a multitude of complex conceptual issues inherent in the subject and affecting all aspects of war child studies. To name just a few examples: memory research traditions and the validity of memory recall (Thiessen, 2008), national interpretations of historical backgrounds, generational memory, memory politics and the public, (Seegers & Reulecke, 2009) as well as gender issues, trans-generational perspectives etc. (Radebold, Bohleber, & Zinnecker, 2008).

4. **Oral History** (Scholl-Schneider, Schneider, & Spurný, 2010; Doerr, 2007) Here interviews and collections of life-histories are allowed to speak for themselves without judgements or interpretations from the researchers, just explanatory remarks.

This brief overview illustrates the difficulties and ambiguities faced by researchers when attempting to gauge levels of damage to the personalities of people presumed to be or have been victims of their war-experiences (Boyden, 2003; Grundmann, 2010).

Approach to Data Analysis

Qualitative or quantitative methods?

Part 2, the Social Research Section of the project explores the life-histories of participants. Life-history research according to Cole & Knowles (2001, p. 9) is "... loosely connected to a central epistemological construct illuminating the intersection of human experience and social context."

Though the human side to the research is best served by qualitative methods, having seen themes and phenomena emerge from the answers to be interpreted, a mixed approach by including some quantitative analyses and graphs also seemed appropriate.

Although this kind of inquiry is different from the rigid, linear and formulaic characteristics of traditional empirical scientific research methods, Cole and Knowles (2001, p. 124) have engaged and dealt very effectively with traditionalists' reservations concerning "researcher objectivity." They have shown that rigour in respect of claims to reliability and validity can indeed be established. These aims are achieved by triangulation and transparency of the research process in terms of perspectives and assumptions. How typical is the case or account in relation to others is a question this research will try to find out.

As in other forms of qualitative research, the individual researchers, through being another human being with his/her own complex personal history, is a guiding influence in all aspects of a study. "Put simply, in social science research, people are studying other people, and all research is in some way autobiographical. After all it is an endeavour where the perspectives of two or more individuals converge and intersect" (Cole & Knowles, 2001, p.10). In this respect the excellent mutual understanding between the researcher and respondents was crucial in enhancing the motivation of both. From the start participants had been comprehensively informed of the nature of the research and were therefore well prepared when they were asked to address the issues set out in the questionnaires. Their resulting cooperation provided much more productive feedback than originally expected.

Validity

Claims to validity for inter-human research can be problematic, therefore there needs to be a measure of rigour to the approach and execution of social research for it to be taken seriously. In this study cross-case analysis and comparisons with the facts established through history research and tested against respondents testimonies as follows.

Triangulation. This is achieved through three factors relevant here

1. Historical information in chapters 3-5
2. Questionnaires based on this research and respondents' answers and

3. Comparative assessments with the history provided in Part 1 of the project.

Transparency

Transparency in the conduct of this research and the method of arrival at results is an important factor relevant to all research, particularly in the social sciences. A full explanation as to the manner of contact and communication with and selection of research participants as well as the method of data collection and storage is contained in the application to the Ethics Committee of the University of Reading. After the project is finished, the original scripts are going to be handed back to respondents in special folders as a record of their memories.

The wider field:

The Expulsion and Flight of the Baltic Germans and others from the East

Information in this section is relevant in the wider field of German War Child studies, also in respect of the Ermann/Bauer study with which comparisons in relation to war time experiences in childhood and levels of emotional damage were possible.

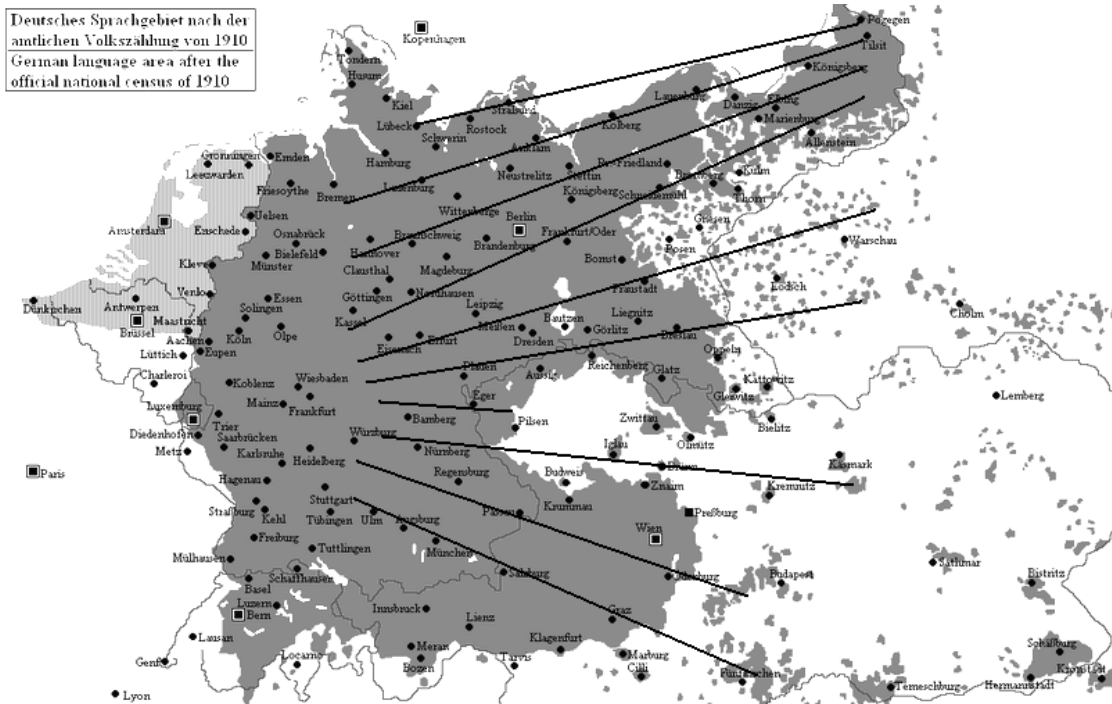
Once the war had ended in Germany's defeat, a time of liberation and rejoicing for the populations of Nazi occupied countries of Europe and the rest of the world, the suffering of German civilians started.

The German Expulsions from Czechoslovakia were not an isolated historical event but part of the bigger picture of the savage history of the first half of the 20th century (Mazower, 2000), taking place within the wider context of massive transgressions against human rights in Europe during and after six years of a brutal war. To understand and make comparisons with the issues German War Child research is targeting it is useful to learn something of the experiences of the mass of approximately 14 to 16 millions of Germans displaced from the East.

As the end of the war approached, and with the Red Army steadily advancing westwards, panic gripped the German population of the East. The ethnic Germans from regions where they had been the ethnic majority bordering the Baltic and in Poland either chose to leave, or were driven out. It applied to most of West and East Prussia bordering the Baltic, as well as Pomerania and Silesia, including the large towns of Danzig/Gdansk, Koenigsberg/Kaliningrad and Breslau/Wrocław. Refugees were desperate to reach the perceived relative security as close as possible to the positions of the Western Allies. Subsequent events which culminated in a human catastrophe bear witness to the fact that perpetrators were not only found on the now defeated German side.

People traversed great distances in huge treks and the routes taken covered hundreds if not thousands of miles. There was chaos, few refugees had a clear idea where they were actually heading, they were just part of this enormous maelstrom moving west in search of safety. In freezing temperatures people travelled in overcrowded trains, moved on foot carrying their belongings, or used horses and carts, with the old people perched on top with the smallest of the children, while the fitter members of the group walked alongside. They were very soon overwhelmed by the difficulties of the terrain, the icy weather of the early months of 1945, and the need for food and shelter for which even the best preparation could never have been sufficient. It was not long before large numbers of children and older members of family units, having to sleep in the open, started to die of cold in temperatures reaching -20C, as well as starvation. To the distress of their families they could not be buried in the frozen ground and had to be left by the side of the road in ditches and fields. This left mothers, often also pregnant,

already weakened, to struggle on with their remaining children, weighed down by their grief and the physical demands of the journey. Often children got separated, sometimes to be reunited with family members years later. Others were too young and never knew who they were or where they came from, and never found their families again.



10 The Exodus and Expulsion of the German population after the end of the Second World War

(http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Historisches_deutsches_Sprachgebiet.PNG, edited and checked for accuracy in Dloczik, Schüttler, and Sternagel (1990, p. 63).

The further east the treks started from, the sooner they were overrun by the Red Army which had been indoctrinated by its own propaganda machine to behave as victors. This encouragement, with the ever present alcohol being a potent disinhibitor, led many of the Red Army soldiers to behave in a most base way, particularly towards females of all ages. The indigenous Germans from the area of East Prussia round Königsberg (Kaliningrad), the ancient capital of East Prussia, were particularly badly hit. The Soviet assault on that city left tens of thousands of civilians dead. Sybille Dreher (2003, p.1) quotes the letter of a witness of the destruction of Königsberg who was 15 years old at the time and writes of her happy childhood on an East Prussian farm. Suddenly they were engulfed by the most terrible hell-fire by Russian enemy action which reduced that ancient city and mighty castle to rubble and ash. The eye-witness writes of her horror of seeing heaps of corpses, beheaded men, dead women, babies and children everywhere.

Several thousand so-called wolf children (Doerr, 2007, p. 451) roamed the countryside. They had lost everyone and hid in the woods of the surrounding Lithuanian countryside trying to survive in an animal like way. They would sometimes appear in Lithuanian villages to beg for food, sometimes to be chased away, but more often being given food by the locals sharing their meagre resources with them. Some were taken in and adopted by Lithuanians, others were later placed in Russian orphanages, but not officially acknowledged as German children. Most would never be able to find members of their own kith and kin (Doerr, 2007, p. 465).

Rather than joining overland treks, a considerable number of Germans from the Baltic areas decided to travel by horse and cart across the frozen Baltic Sea where many families were lost in the icy waters as the sea ice was always treacherous. Approximately 2.5 million people were evacuated in about 1000 German Navy ships and vessels of the German Merchant Fleet, heading west to ports like Luebeck, Kiel and to Denmark. These ships were crammed with thousands of refugees, many having to stand upright on decks for the duration of the journey, tightly packed against one another subject to temperatures of -20C. Not surprisingly every now and again somebody would fall forward, lifeless, stiff like a plank of wood, having to be buried at sea.

The most famous of these ships was the *Wilhelm Gustloff*, which was torpedoed by the Russians. About 1,240 of 11,000 passengers survived, to date the biggest loss of life in the history of shipping. Another 40,000 perished on other ships which were also sunk.

Once the Russians had caught up with the migrating masses (there are witness reports of whole tank formations rolling over the moving human columns), they found themselves in Soviet-controlled areas. Women and girls were regarded as war booty and abused on a vast scale, often left badly injured or dead. Many people were killed when the refugee streams were attacked by low flying fighter aircraft adding to the horror. Many adults and children were subsequently forced into internment camps locally, or transported to Russian labour camps, even youngsters in their early teens ended up in Siberia, facing shocking conditions for years. Lack of food and the unhygienic conditions in the camps in Eastern Europe meant premature death to many, as typhus and other deadly diseases spread like wild-fire. Children would watch powerless as their parents got sick and faded away, vice-versa mothers would fight desperately to keep their starving and sick children alive, only to lose them. That more or less outlines the wider German war child field as far as expulsion, flight and migration affected those caught up in it.

The Sudeten German experience in comparison

However, the Sudeten German experience was somewhat different and within that context it will become obvious that the Germans of Gablonz reacted to their fate in quite an unexpected

and untypical manner. This marks them out as a special case and why they were chosen for this study.

Enough is known about the formidable post-war physical challenges on the German civilian population. However, when, after the fall of Communism, access to East European archives became possible after 40 years behind the Iron Curtain, interest in the post-war years flared up again. The German media and journalist and broadcaster Sabine Bode started to probe what lay behind the outward image of success of Germany's post-war recovery, in doing so a Pandora's box opened, spilling out a multitude of seemingly long forgotten stories of quite shocking past suffering of those who were children during the war and post-war. Much of what had been left unspoken up to then and had largely only been part of familial and medical knowledge, reached the public via TV documentaries and the press. The impact was considerable and stirred up many hitherto unanswered questions in the German general public and academic community.

Nowadays children whose young lives have been blighted by war are likely to be treated as victims and considerable humanitarian efforts are made worldwide to help them cope with their physical and mental wounds. German children affected by the Second World War became senior citizens before public acknowledgement of their childhood suffering was forthcoming. But there are those for whom forgetting the past was/is not an option, as many have never been able to escape the memories of their childhood, having to deal with the indelible imprint of those times on their lives to the end of their days.

After 1945 the historical overview was soon lost in the countries concerned and abroad. Immediately post-war German and Austrian history lessons dealt in depth with Greek and Roman history and only began to address their own countries' recent history much later. After knowledge of the Holocaust spread, a sense of guilt developed among Germans and prevented any discourse on their own war-time suffering. The public dialogue on war child suffering concentrated on Holocaust victims, the famous story of Anne Frank being just one example of many dealt with in schools and the media over the years.

The implication of belonging to a perpetrator nation never far from the surface, there have all along been voices in the media and even academia, questioning the validity of Germans also being categorised as victims. In recent War Child research they are often referred to as Hitler's last victims. What is known as the *silence of the German war children* (Ackermann, 2004) was sometimes compared to not wanting to touch a wound for fear of activating pain. Dealing with the sudden recent interest in their past, the burden of which they mostly did not even acknowledge to themselves and suppressed for decades (Bode, 2009) required mental and emotional stamina, which participants amply demonstrated to the benefit of this study.

In addition to information sought about respondents' *impressions of the history* they experienced in Questionnaires 2 and 3, *emotional issues* were probed in Questionnaires 2 and 4. These are summarised in the tables in the following sections.

All questions probing participants' life-histories had a dual function:

1. *To provide a window on individual life histories*
2. *To yield scientific information useful within the wider context of Social Science War Child Research.*

Participants' recall of their autobiographical memory is considered a reliable source of primary information capable of conveying information about themselves in the past and present. Their answers are allowed to stand as final data capable of being analysed

The Impact of History and Politics on Research Participants' lives

(Ethics standards maintained throughout)

The Concepts which generated the Method of Construction for the Questionnaires

Summary of Sudeten History (Chapters 3-5) reflected in Participants' life-stations below	Research Targets-Question Topics: arising from the historical context (left column)
<p style="text-align: center;">Respondents' 7 Life Stations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pre-1945: War. <i>First home/school in Gablonz</i> 2. Pre-expulsion period 3. Expulsion - Loss of home-expropriation. <i>Holding camp. Transport.</i> 4. Arrival in the new host-region - <i>Resettlement, new school, temporary home.</i> 5. New home 6. Transitional period - Partial integration 7. Adult life - Full Integration ??? 	<p style="text-align: center;">History and its Effects on Humans</p> <p>Reflected in 7 life stations (left) experienced by 16 German Bohemian Children born 1933-1940 expelled after 1945:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1. History?</p> <p>As lived and remembered by respondents, in childhood and beyond, but judged in retrospect.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2. The Human Dimension? Social Research</p> <p>What were the effects on participants' lives as children and later?</p>

Narrative stimuli and interview enquiry lines: below

Social Research question-areas: grey

1. Pre-1945: War First home/school in Gablonz

<p style="text-align: center;">Families' first home: 1933-1945</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1st period in childrens' lives</p>
<p><i>Living in their original homes in Gablonz, their ancestral home region, an attractive wooded and mountainous area of northern Bohemia. The children were members of the 3.5 million German-speaking population of inter-war Czechoslovakia; in a dominant majority position in the areas bordering on Germany and Austria (Chapter1-5, maps). A highly developed industrial region, the children's home area, in and around Gablonz was renowned world - wide for the excellence of its glass products and paste jewellery.</i></p> <p><i>Sudeten German parents were unhappy with Czech political attitudes towards the German minority within their boundaries since 1918.</i></p> <p><i>Hitler's Annexation (1938) of the Sudetenland was generally welcomed</i></p> <p><i>A short time of rejoicing, hope, and relief followed. Justice in their opinion had finally been restored. Their claim related to the areas where German-speakers were in the overwhelming majority.</i></p> <p><i>Sudeten (Bohemian) Germans were from now on automatically citizens of the Reich. Soon cultural differences became apparent as a result of their 1000 year old connection with multi-ethnic Austria. Many families were ethnically mixed (Czech-German). More pragmatic attitude, even rejection of the Reich's NS racial policies.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">up to 1945</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Normal start to life in Gablonz, Bohemia. Pre-school - First school before Expulsion</p> <p><i>How - what do you remember about this period in your life?</i></p> <p><u>Memories of Family:</u> Socio- economic position, work status, jobs, profession? Father? Mother? Grandparents? Extended family? Friends?</p> <p><u>Home:</u> Home life generally? (happy, difficult ...) Prevailing atmosphere? <u>Respondent's Personality?</u> <u>Temperament-Outlook?</u> Pre-post expulsion? A person's personality has a bearing on how things are remembered and told. How did their experiences affect participants' lives?</p> <p><u>Political Outlook of parent generation?</u> Inter-war years, Annexation? Approval? Reservations? Hitler? Reich? Pro- anti - neutral- ambivalent? Pro-Austrian-German-Czech? Perceptions of the 'other' (German-Czech)? <u>Interaction with Czechs fellow-citizens?</u> Czech family members? Czech friends, neighbours? Contacts and nature of interaction with Czechs? <u>Identity of parent generation?</u> Austrian Bohemian, Reich) German Bohemian, German Czech? <u>The Annexation of Sudetenland</u> Perceptions of the peoples' reactions after Hitler's takeover? Seen as liberation or occupation? Reich influences on daily life? Grandparents – Parents attitudes: Pre- post Annexation? <u>School:</u> Reich influences on school-life? Teachers in uniform? Banners, flags? Mottos, the Fuehrer's picture, swastikas? What impression? Effects of NS policies? Admiration-approval - critical attitudes? <u>Significance of 'Heimat', the ancestral home area?</u> (A very</p>

	<p>potent and evocative concept for Germans.) Was it thought of as Czech or German?</p> <p>Aware of the beautiful Bohemian home? environment?</p> <p>What did they like best?</p> <p>What did not appeal?</p> <p>What did they miss most/least of their home and home region after being expelled?</p>
<p><i>Outbreak of the Second World War, 1939</i></p> <p><i>Hope turning to disappointment.</i></p> <p><i>Changes to everyday life. Reich Germans taking over in public life. Resentment: local population being sidelined.</i></p> <p><i>Propaganda. Everyone expected to give their all to the war effort. Men called up, mainly to the Eastern Front. Appalling losses.</i></p> <p><i>Rationing. Lean times all round, particularly in working class families.</i></p> <p><i>Loss of overseas markets for Gablonz glass products. Production geared to the war effort.</i></p> <p>.</p>	<p><u>War related Memories?</u></p> <p>Propaganda-fed early optimism?</p> <p>Reality?</p> <p>What disappointments?</p> <p>Rationing? Deprivation?</p> <p><u>Soldier: Father, Brother, Uncle?</u></p> <p>Alive? War-casualties?</p> <p>Their stories on home leave? Doubts creeping in?</p> <p>Survival? Home-coming?</p> <p>Mother new partner?</p> <p><u>The reaction of the parent generation?</u></p> <p>Attitudes/judgements of the parent generation?</p> <p><u>Work? Time for Parenting?</u></p> <p>Mother's role? Grandparents?</p> <p>How coped?</p> <p>Child's role? (Most were too young to comment.)</p> <p><u>War-time co-existence with Czechs?</u></p>

2. Pre-expulsion Period – extremely worrying and confusing

<p>The War Years. Pre-school and First School</p> <p><i>Propaganda, 'Fuehrer', cult. Youth training aimed at character building. The old Prussian virtues + those of the Reich: loyalty to the cause, discipline, bravery...)</i></p> <p><i>Children were expected to please the 'Fuehrer' who would be proud of them if they tried hard, behaved well etc.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2nd period in children's lives</p> <p><u>NS ideology in the curriculum?</u></p> <p>Propaganda?</p> <p>What was drummed in?</p> <p>The Reich's great future for the Germans: Believing in it?</p> <p>Admiration for the cause?</p> <p>Indifference? Rejection?</p> <p>Finding any aspects difficult?</p> <p>Youth culture? You/your siblings in any groups?</p> <p>What felt normal, what stood out as strange?</p> <p><u>Activities? Sports, Games, Camps?</u></p> <p>Siblings take on it?</p> <p><u>Special Memories?</u> Summer-nights under canvas? Singing?</p> <p>Fun and Games?</p> <p><u>Reactions?</u> (Un)impressed, enthusiastic, indifferent?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">End of the War - Pre-Expulsion Period</p> <p><i>1945 The Collapse of Germany. Anti-German hate campaign by Czech politicians returning from exile. Retribution activities - Beneš Decrees. German population suffering extreme stress. Feelings of being powerless, let down.</i></p> <p><i>Liberation of Czechoslovakia by the arrival of the Soviet Army. Large scale plundering and general mayhem. Alcohol fuelled violence and atrocities. Abuse of females of all ages.</i></p> <p><i>Mistreatment of the German civilian population by revengeful mobs militia groups Czech Communists and radical Nationalists. Atrocities. Internment. Thousands of suicides among the German population ahead of the Expulsions.</i></p> <p><i>'Wild expulsions', then on the insistence of the Allies 'Organised Expulsions' leading to months if internment due bureaucratic delays leading to Starvation, sickness, deaths. Stress, waiting to be stripped of all possessions and forced out of home. Complete loss of control. Adults and children, if German speakers, treated with total contempt and often subject to brutality.</i></p> <p><i>"The Czechs look at them like cattle" (Naimark, 2002, p.118).</i></p>	<p><u>Life in Gablonz? General Atmosphere?</u></p> <p><u>Reactions? Child? Adults?</u></p> <p>Worries?</p> <p>Opinion of the older generation about events?</p> <p>Judgements about what was going on?</p> <p><u>What emotions?</u></p> <p>Sadness?</p> <p>Anxiety?</p> <p>Fear?</p> <p>Rage?</p> <p><u>Physical problems?</u></p> <p>Sickness?</p> <p>Lack of food?</p> <p>Humiliations?</p> <p>Violence?</p> <p><u>Later:</u></p> <p>Hanging on to memories?</p> <p>How long?</p> <p><u>After-effects?</u></p> <p>Persistent?</p> <p>Occasional?</p> <p>None?</p>

3. Expulsion - Loss of home and total expropriation. Holding camp. Transport

<p style="text-align: center;">Loss or fragmentation of support systems, exposure to random acts of cruelty.</p> <p><i>The situation of the German civilians: complete chaos. No legal protection, thugs meting out 'retribution justice': Extreme stress.</i></p> <p><i>Family home with contents and all possessions forcibly taken over by strangers..The children being present throughout. Having to leave everything dear to them, Toys having to be left behind</i></p> <p><i>*During 'Wild expulsions' one could only take rucksacks and/or hand luggage. Later cases of 30-50 kg of essentials allowed.</i></p> <p><i>Taken to holding camp or having to find temporary accommodation</i></p> <p><i>Camp. Guards frequently serving themselves from last possessions. Valuables and money taken away. Sentimental mementos like favourite toys or photos deliberately destroyed, trampled on etc.</i></p> <p><i>Deportation. Crammed into locked freight wagons, either closed with narrow slits high up or open to the elements. Often thick layers of coal dust, cattle faeces or human waste on the floor. No sanitation. Hardly any food or water. Sometimes travelling for days. People dying, particularly old people, babies.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3rd period in children's lives</p> <p><u>Memories?</u> How did the child take in the unimaginable? Having to say goodbye to everything they held dear? Losing access to favourite places, friends, extended family?</p> <p>Taking it in? Being told something else?</p> <p>Witnessing others taking possession of their families' property and belongings?</p> <p><u>Physical and emotional reactions?</u> To losing: Home? Favourite possessions? Friends and neighbours?</p> <p><u>Holding camp?</u> Treatment? Accommodation? Food? Witness to incidents? Sickness Hardship? Support?</p> <p><u>Transportation?</u> Details? The worst times? Some good times? What concept of the future? Kindness? From whom? Fellow expellees? Strangers? Czechs? Czechs' reactions?</p>
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4. **Arrival in the new host-region - Resettlement, new school, temporary home**

<p style="text-align: center;">Post Expulsion</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4th period in children's lives</p>
<p><i>After Transportation, arrival in Germany, either in the Soviet or American Sectors mostly Bavaria.</i></p> <p><i>Thousands in need of accommodation. Hostility by the locals, even from the church.</i></p> <p><i>Extremely basic substandard accommodation, often forcibly requisitioned from the 'natives' by the municipality. Overcrowding. Camps – 2 occupants per bed. Many families sharing, tensions, years of sleeping on the floor with or without straw, rucksacks as pillows. Packing cases serving as furniture. Hardship and deprivation</i></p> <p><i>Children aware of being the poorest of the poor.</i></p> <p><i>Great efforts by Old Gablonzers, eventually successful to start up their glass manufacture on a large industrial area of a former munitions factory in Kaufbeuren blown up by the Americans.</i></p> <p><i>This district became Neugablonz after an intense struggle to gain permission from the Bavarian authorities to build manufacturing units and houses there.</i></p> <p>New school, 1945 onwards <i>Being ridiculed for speaking Bohemian German and not being farmers' children. Put to work on farms. Aware of being the poorest of the poor. Often picked on and bullied for being a 'refugee' and insisting on being an 'expellee', having come from a background better than the host-region could offer.</i></p> <p>Chapter 5, Gablonz – Neugablonz. Success.</p>	<p><u>The early years in Bavaria?</u></p> <p>The nature of temporary accommodation?</p> <p>Levels of comfort?</p> <p>Food?</p> <p>Money?</p> <p>Employment?</p> <p>Reactions of the locals?</p> <p>Support? Rejection?</p> <p><u>The parent generation?</u></p> <p>Coping?</p> <p>Did father, brother, uncle... return from the war? Changed?</p> <p>Family life? Different?</p> <p>Previous life-comparisons?</p> <p><u>Children?</u></p> <p>Impressions of new area?</p> <p>Hunger?</p> <p>Deprivation?</p> <p>Sickness?</p> <p>Humiliations?</p> <p>(Looking poor, different accent)</p> <p>Comparisons with before?</p> <p>Homesick?</p> <p>Missing what?</p> <p><u>Bavarian school-life?</u></p> <p>Teachers?</p> <p>Fellow pupils?</p> <p>Inter- relationships?</p> <p>Personal reactions?</p> <p>Others' reactions?</p> <p>Treatment</p> <p>How coped?</p> <p>Good times?</p> <p>Bad times?</p>

5. New Home

<p style="text-align: center;">New permanent Home.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">5th period: Adolescence</p>
<p><i>Better times. Glass-ware production re-established, soon booming. Great demand world-wide. Family members in employment. Great progress all round. All displaced Germans from the East who had survived their ordeal were instrumental in the post-war German 'Wirtschaftswunder', the Economic Miracle. Their manpower and consumer needs drove the German industrial engine to economic recovery. The country was able to rise from the ashes and put its bad times behind it. Success and making money became a preoccupation for families.</i></p> <p><i>Little time for children, now growing up. Their needs were frequently overlooked by the busy working generation. Parents' attitude: why complain, one was alive, when so many had perished. It was not appropriate for children to show negative emotions.</i></p>	<p>What did it take to get established?</p> <p>Family successful?</p> <p>At what cost to the parent generation?</p> <p>How did the children fare?</p> <p><u>Childrens' perceptions of their lives?</u></p> <p>What difference to circumstances?</p> <p>Better-worse than in old home?</p> <p>Memories of old homeland receding?</p> <p>Living in the past-present-future?</p>

6. Transitional period - Partial integration

<p style="text-align: center;">Transitional period, late 40s, early 50s</p> <p><i>Secondary School, High School</i></p> <p><i>Growing up, adjusting and blending in. Accepting and being accepted.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Partial Integration</p> <p><i>Vocational training, Further and Higher Education</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">6th life-station</p> <p>Acceptance of permanent change to life? Ambivalence? Respected again? Respect for new fellow-citizens? Feelings for new environment? What feelings about life now? Perspective on life? Busy?</p> <p>Looking back? Optimistic? Where is Home now?</p>
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7. Adult life - Full Integration ???

<p style="text-align: center;">Full Integration?</p> <p><i>The former War Children?</i> <i>Start of adult life: Work, Career</i></p> <p><i>The parent generation?</i> <i>Identity?</i> <i>First Austrian Bohemians, then Sudeten Germans in Czechoslovakia. Nazi 'Annexation', World War 2 and Expulsion.</i> <i>Post-1945 becoming part of the population of the new democratic Germany. Successful again</i> <i>All had experienced 2 Wars, then the expulsions and their aftermath while continuing to raise their children and provide for their families.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">7th life-station</p> <p><u>Respondents perceptions post-war?</u></p> <p>General disposition-outlook-attitudes? Fading memories? Nostalgia? Making comparisons? Results? Resentments, regrets? Acceptance and closure? Did children and later as adults feel they had to suppress their feelings, not to burden parents. Untouchable question areas? <u>Respondents looking back</u> (almost 70 years on): Any nostalgia left? Making comparisons, judgements re. themselves (e.g vis-a-vis children of today?) How different from today's situation? Political outlook? New horizons? <u>Memories of the Parent generation' reactions?</u>, re all the above <u>Personal outlook now?</u> Resentments, regrets? What might have been? Acceptance and closure? Pragmatic? Indifferent?</p>
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	<p>Judgements on parents' generation? How coped? Achievements? Signs of Trauma: Irrational fears, nightmares, behavioural peculiarities. Can they identify the sources of fear, phobias, anxiety...? Dissociation of the source of fear? Willing to put the past behind them?</p> <hr/> <p>Czech-German reconciliation initiatives?</p>
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All Case Studies based on full testimonies

Many weeks of continuous work were necessary to process the answer material of all 16 participants in the core-group, first translating and transcribing the testimonies of the core-group and material supplied later by Czech and more German respondents. All respondents produced well written, cohesive accounts of their memories, totally relevant as per questions and narrative stimuli. It was surprising how effectively they had taken their mission on board, keeping to what was asked without introducing irrelevant material.

The design of the 4 questionnaires below reflects the key-factors guiding the choice of question topics, presented in what was considered the best way to elicit meaningful answer material. The questionnaires are thematically linked. They explore the historic times respondents witnessed and the life-long impact of their experiences as expellees.

Questionnaire 1 and 3 (*History and Politics*)

Questionnaire 2 and 4 (*The Human Dimension*)

Insights gained turned out to be much more than just being suitable for evaluation, analysis and capable of delivering useful results. The portrayal of history experienced remains relatively consistent, while, as is to be expected, the spectrum of emotional reactions varies from person to person.

Below 4 complete testimony examples of case scenarios are reproduced in full.

Thus a more vivid and complete picture emerges how participants' families judged their overall situation and reacted to it.

The following testimonies were provided by respondents 13M39, 9M38, 7F39 and 14F39. Almost all respondents also provided copies of letters and documents, as well as relevant photos.

4 Complete Examples of Questionnaires 1 – 4 with Answers

13M39

QUESTIONNAIRE 1

(12 Questions on history remembered, supplemented by Questionnaire 3 in a follow-up interview)

1	<p>Childhood?</p> <p>Grandparents: farmers. Farm and saw-mill (built 1930. Demolished post 1945) Parents: father attended technical university in Pilsen. From 1926 technical director, machine manufacturing company. Mother worked in office of a large machinery firm, still in the high-street of Gablonz. Loved nature, swimming, hiking,skiing.</p> <p>One cousin, a doctor, was married to a Czech. Good relations and socialised with all neighbours, German.</p> <p>No proper family life as such, father not present (War).</p> <p>Single child: I was happy, untroubled and loved nature, flowers and the scenery and what grandfather and mother drew my attention to, like the night sky. Felt safe and loved our dog, our neighbours and their children. Still in loose contact with old playmates.</p> <p>Favourite foods? Liked all food, but later one was lucky to get enough to eat. To this day the plate is cleared, no food is thrown away.</p>
2	<p>1918-38? Father bought a run-down house and renovated it in 1937. Only about 5% (<i>actually more than 16%</i>) Czechs in Gablonz pre 1945. Had come to work, learnt German and were totally integrated, though there were pubs purely for Czechs. After 1918: problems. German state officials were transferred into purely Czech areas so their children would not be able to attend German schools. Grandma spent 8 years in Czech schools. Later foreign language secretary in large factory. Germans did also learn Czech and carried on interacting, but did not forget the 54 victims shot in March 1919, when the Bohemian areas were occupied. Sought to retain their language and culture in German associations, Turnverein etc. Many, particularly the SDP did not like to see the bulk of German tax revenue, the result of their hard work, going to the Czech government to be used to their disadvantage. Our family was not active in the party but we felt German and spoke only German at home.</p>
3	<p>Annexation? Was too young to to see differences between nationalities, Czechs seemed totally integrated and behaved unobtrusively. One of my cousins stayed with us for a bit, After he had left the Gestapo came looking for him. Was possibly a deserter. Was never seen or heard of again.</p>
4	<p>War? Father called up in 1940, every short leave great for us, we missed him so. Don't know what the mood was like in the population. Mother showed me an atlas, there Germany looked very small compared to Russia, was not keen on that situation.</p>
5	<p>Identity? Grandparents: Old Imperial Austrians. Only one grandparent alive when I was young. He and his cycling friends, all over 70, called themselves 'Austria's German youth' and sang German folk-songs. Parents felt German, as they originated in German-speaking areas. Our family not active in the party but we felt German and spoke only German at home</p>
6	<p>End of War-Pre Expulsion?</p> <p>Grandfather forced to do hard labour in his own business (Mill, built 1930) for the new Czech administrator, who had taken over. Germans had to wear white armband with 'N', In my wife's birthplace, Landskron, Czech militias from outside had a field day, hence the well known infamous Landskron atrocities. Wife's uncle several times pushed under and semi-drowned in market place water reservoir but rescued by a local Czech, blind for the rest of his life. Another uncle shot after returning home from the war alive.</p>

	<p>We heard rumours Germans would be expelled, noticed neighbours being collected and Czechs moving in. The firm my mother had worked for was taken over, she carried on working anyway. Had not heard from father, friends advised mother to pack things, we were allowed 50kg. Nothing much was happening in our idyllic village high above Gablonz, then the Russians came past, one looked through our house for schnapps, then took some new handkerchiefs, my birthday present. I started to cry, he put them down again and even smoothed them out. Then he went to a neighbour's house, the young woman fled and he shot her in the leg. Whenever Russians rode past my heart pounded with fear, we did not turn the light on in the evening. Czechs took my beloved German sheep-dog, he came running back but they took him off me again.</p> <p>Meanwhile we had heard father had been released by the French and was in Kaufbeuren hoping to help with re-establishing the old Gablonz industries. We could not wait for the 'Zuzugsgenehmigung', the permission to join him in the American zone.</p>
7	<p>Expulsion? In June 1946 we and grandfather were collected by the new Czech 'burgernaster' (vibor) in a horse drawn cart and taken with our luggage to the Reinowitz camp. We were not checked too thoroughly but money was taken off us, we buried my baptism coin. As we had been prepared and expecting to be called the whole thing went off relatively calmly. Mother had taken bedding, clothing, also for my father who had been released just with his prison uniform, cooking utensils, even board games for me,</p> <p>3 Weeks of oppressive situations in the locked cattle transporter crammed full of people, chaos when changing trains in the middle of the night, in various camps, 40 people to a room, quarrels, fever, inoculations, quarantine camp, hunger, lack of food, one was forced to suppress any reaction. On top of that not knowing how things would go on, what was going to happen,</p>
8	<p>New Home? Father collected us on arrival in Kaufbeuren, still wearing the black uniform with which he had been discharged from the prisoner of war camp, had no other clothes. I was less than thrilled with the whole situation when I saw how skeletal he looked but got enthusiastic about the fountain in the park we passed. 4 people in one room did not suit the landlord so in August 1946 we moved into one of the ruined buildings on the land of the dynamited munitions factory. Got the official permission to live in house 568 and were the first family to live in what was to become Neugablonz. It was just a shell and full of rubble, no windows or doors but there was electricity water and a toilet.</p> <p>We collected bricks and built a stove outside, cooked on it until a chimney was constructed then we were able to use a cooker. There was a lack of everything, you had to have ration cards for foods and official bits of paper, 'Bezugsscheine', for everything you wanted to buy. My grandfather was a qualified art metal specialist for objects like chandeliers etc., previously created in Gablonz. He made things for everyday use, pots and pans, buckets, sieve, lids, oven implements, clothes-hangers, lampshades, flyswats. Grandpa and I often went into the surrounding villages to ask for something edible. Some refused but others gave milk, eggs, apples. First we slept on primitive folding American cloth military beds but in time we had some furniture made by a joiner. Also we started to keep chickens and rabbits, so life was better for us than for those in the camps. We collected berries, mushrooms, pine-cones and wood. There was no place to go shopping, we had to drag everything from Kaufbeuren or villages miles away. Trees were removed and fruit trees seeded and planted. Parents were very busy and wasted no time being sad or looking back. Relations who had lost a mill and farm were now farm hands and did complain, justifiably. Generally comparisons with 'before' were useless, one had to get on with all the deprivations etc. Very few did nothing waiting to return. Most thought their chances were good and remained optimistic. A priest who had smuggled hymn books out, read mass in the camp every Sunday and celebrated Christmas 1946 in the woods. He also organised a Carnival ball in the community barrack building at the beginning of 1947.</p> <p>Sept. 1946 I started school, as I was already 7, I found everything very easy, helped by the fact that our teacher spoke High-German, rather than the local dialect. She was from East Prussia and had ridden to</p>

	<p>the West on her horse. The children in the villages could not understand High-German and thought we could not speak the language. I was very pleased when at Christmas I was rewarded with a small wooden car by my teacher, as I had done well. There were absolutely no problems with fellow pupils or the fact of being a Catholic in a Protestant school. I had to go 6 km from and to school each day before a wood-gas driven bus service was started.</p> <p>Father had started his shop in February 1947 in Kaufbeuren, I could go there when it was raining, also we could eat at the free soup kitchen. I liked going to the St. Martin's church with its beautiful pictures and figures.</p> <p>Soon a school was started in barracks in the woods, the 'Waldschule'. There were no toilets and gymnastics was done on a meadow, next to it. We had the most glorious times playing in that area, it was fenced off so we could roam to our hearts content.</p> <p>!949 a provisional church was erected. with us all helping. Many associations were (re)established, starting with sports clubs, choirs and singing groups. My father was chairman for a building group responsible for the construction of a sports hall still in use. He always said 'youth has to be off the street.'</p> <p>There was little time for the upbringing of the children. They had to help if possible, in the garden, in the business or with work at home. The children were mostly compliant, thought it normal, had the parents as examples.</p>
9	<p>Postwar- new world-order? New impressions all round helped one to get over things. Many just got on with trying to improve the situation, there were many widows and fatherless children who had all got to get through somehow and looked forward to better times. Food and getting set up in a home were the priorities. One did not speak much about the Hitler times but thought it mad that our small country had been fighting a war on all fronts. The suffering was partly blamed on the Fuehrer, though the achievements of those days were also acknowledged, like the motorways, technical progress and the 'order' in everyday life. Negative: Lost homeland and the disaster brought upon people by the megalomaniac.</p>
10	<p>Missing Gablonz, old home, what?</p> <p>.</p>
11	<p>Integration: Quickly got used to the new set-up, the new 'Heimat'. There were many people from the old home-land, got on with everybody, also later in business though I don't speak Bavarian dialect. Never felt discriminated against, don't miss anything in Bavaria would not want to be without the scenery and mountains.</p>
12	<p>Feelings about old home region today? The old home-land is only an occasional holiday destination. Have been inside the old house. House, garden and fence look very neglected, but the landscape is still fascinating, even though the woods look different. Grandparents' house has been demolished, the foundations, ponds and brook are still there.</p>

QUESTIONNAIRE 2

(30 Questions probing emotions supplemented by Questionnaire 4 in a follow-on interview)

1	<p>Temperament? Single child.</p> <p>Before:</p> <p>I was happy, untroubled, active and exploring, loved nature, flowers and the scenery and what grandfather and mother drew my attention to, like the night sky. Felt safe and loved our dog, our neighbours and their children. Still in loose contact with old playmates.</p> <p>After:</p> <p>Carefully weighing everything up, reserved, circumspect, had got to know the bad aspects of life, which I</p>
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	did not know about before, took a long time to come to decisions.
2	What was difficult? Pre Exp. Father's absence.
3	Able to speak about your feelings? Could speak about everything with mother.
4	Suppressed feelings? More subconsciously, did not want to get into controversies. But lost spontaneity as I suppressed anger, and also self-confidence. Put my wishes last, to this day.
5	Whom did you not wish to burden? Did not burden anyone with the past, that was well and truly over.
6	Encouragement? The example of parents, looking ahead, not back. The obvious progress as a reward for all the efforts and hard work, times so much better than during the expulsion. Regular get-togethers with family on visits to Frankfurt and Vienna when enjoyable memories were reawakened. Religion. Mother chair person of the Womens' Association for 26 years and did a lot of good.
7	Distractions? Child: exploring new surroundings, new friends, school and leisure activities quickly helped to forget the old home Adult: Family, job, attending church, youth-group activities, sport.
8	Homesick? How long? Not long, missed the garden, our neighbours' children, the beautiful surroundings with the wonderful view of the mountains, the boulders which I imagined to be my castle and our dog. Not relevant today. Now the past is just a beautiful memory.
9	Sad? What about, as Child-Adult? Can't remember. Old house and grandparents' house would have made great holiday homes.
10	Loss of Childhood? Parents fully occupied, therefore children were not expected to disturb and had to get by without asking a lot of questions. Also expected to help with the 'Wiederaufbau'- reconstruction, in the widest sense. But we had enough time for our games in the huge area which is now Neugablonz.
11	Adjusting to the new circumstances? After the chaos of being transported in the cattle train and a caring father being present again, new friends, new school and the new environment meant I did not really miss anything other than the dog and our idyllic surroundings
12	What did you get used to? What never? School and teachers very nice. On outings it became obvious that here too were brooks, lakes and beautiful scenery. Nice childhood memories, but don't miss anything and 'home' is here.
13	Old-new home, positive-negative? Did not look back, to meet the challenges was considered 'normal' by the family.
14	The challenges of post-war Germany? Reactions? As above
15	Reactions today? Go with things, perhaps because not showing any fear and anxiety during the chaos of the transport primed me to be brave, in order not to get problems. (H: A LESSON IN SELF-CONTROL AND DISCIPLINE)
16	Family life after Exp.? Better than before, complete, father was back and grandpa lived with us and could help. Thought his last 14 years with us were the best of his life.
17	Reason for later capability? Example of parents, who never shied away from any work challenge, did not look back, self-pity prevents progress.
18	Times of Depression etc.? Almost not at all
19	Traumatized or burdened ('belastet')? No, as a child one does not experience things quite the same as an adult.
20	Aware of people who failed to cope? Yes, those who committed suicide, having lost everything or were singled out for 'special treatment' by the Czechs. Was not mentioned much.
21	Past still relevant? No, only Neugablonz and my father's role in its construction.
22	What is no longer relevant for you? The Czechs.
23	How would your life be, had the break not happened? Life could not be better here after 67 years of peace.
24	Retired, content with life in Germany? Absolutely.

25	Positive aspects of the break in your life? To have proved one could manage to get back up again from being rock bottom and was able to be successful and lead a comfortable existence in spite of everything.
26	Hatred of the Czechs? For a long time did not want to have anything to do with them, did not go back for 50 years. My mother-in-law hated them, her beloved brother was shot dead and a brother-in-law was nearly drowned in the village reservoir, Landskron. Saved by local Czech. Others perished.
27	Your opinion re the Czechs today? Even though what happened to us was bracketed out of their history text books, we now need to strive for normalisation within a united Europa.
28	Ever witnessed brutal acts? No, apart from neighbours' girl shot in the leg by Russian, and the Czech camp guards who stole from our luggage. Father's parents' house was plundered and trashed, then demolished.
29	How did you find out about atrocities? Wife's uncle was shot by Czechs from outside the area, had survived the war. Another uncle in the Landskron atrocity, saved by a Czech but blind after being submerged time and again in the village reservoir.
30	Your reactions to NS crimes? We did not know of concentration camps, Getting to know about it caused outrage generally and with me to this day. Everything about it and the whole senseless war. We grasped after the war how people had been misled and betrayed. An idiotic madness.

QUESTIONNAIRE 3

(10 Questions about inter-war grievances as remembered from parents' and grandparents comments)

a	School, Kindergardens, closures? -----
b	Job, Pension loss or difficulties, sackings? -----
c	Pressure to give Czechs priority? -----
d	Interference in business matters? -----
e	Obligatory to learn-speak perfect Czech? Yes, had to learn it.
f	Retraining change of career necess.? The German policeman was replaced by a Czech.
g	Currency reform? -----
h	Landreform? Heard about it.
i	Higher taxes? -----
j	Irritations? -----

QUESTIONNAIRE 4

(26 Questions, follow up interview on emotional issues)

1	Single, married etc. married
2	No father? Came back
3	New Beginning, stress? Parents: no time for children. Lovely games in the rubble strewn woods.
4	New Beginning, successful? One looked ahead rather than back, mother often ill.
5	Effect on you? Camp, one room for 40 people. Transport in cattle -wagon, anxiety, terrible insecurities about future.
6	Mainly good – bad experiences? Mainly good.
7	Which periods? Children also worked with adults.
8	Religious? Yes
9	Shy, negative, reserved? Reserved, silent type, very careful before taking decisions, don't like taking decisions.

10	Preferring own company? Single child, likes own company, but see below
11	Sociable or prefers to be alone? Like socialising
12	Positive, insistent, (impatient)? Positive
13	Wanting to lead, give directions? In the business but not otherwise. Cooperative and looking for consensus.
14	Any special foibles, obsessions? Exact, punctual. Cleanliness, order but not obsessive, can be tolerant.
15	Collecting, not throwing anything away – getting rid of things, wanting everything new? Using things up, don't like to throw away food.
16	Aversions? People who want to be centre-stage.
17	Worries?
18	Deep seated anxieties? Relaxed
19	Deep seated rage? No
20	Aims when young? To be a gardener, still a hobby.
21	Later: To take over the business.
22	In retirement? To travel, to be able to maintain everything and go old without difficulties.
23	Reaction to the study? Positive
24	Surprise? Generally, interest in media too late. Time witnesses dead.
25	Pleased? Good the subject is finally dealt with.
26	Best to forget everything? No, It is part of history but still relevant.

9M38

QUESTIONNAIRE 1

(12 Questions on history remembered, supplemented by Questionnaire 3 in a follow-up interview)

1	<p>Childhood?</p> <p>Lived in 2 neighbouring houses In Rochlitz, mountain village, 2 hrs walk below the source of the Elbe. 5000 inhabitants, Germans, hardly any Czechs. No Czechs in family, name Czech. Members of fam. owned a stationary shop, a tobacconist and rope-making business in which father worked + 1 Czech to the end. Car and motor bike, later confiscated.</p> <p>Childhood:</p> <p>Nice childhood in mountain village, 3 other siblings , 7, 5, 1 ½ mother pregnant (birth of sister in June 1945 in Saxony over the border)</p>
2	<p>1918-38? Rochlitz, one of several villages along the Lser river outside Gablonz. Mainly textile factories, weaving. Mother used to say: owners- Jews, managers -German, workers -Czech. Peaceful coexistence was possible. After 1918 officials in the railways, postal service and local administration mostly Czechs. People cross about it. Then fight started for the retention of German schools.</p>
3	<p>Annexation?</p> <p>Father had done basic military training in the Czech Army (1928), was called up again in 1938 prior to the invasion of German forces but did not report for service, like many others. Crossed over the border nearby into Silesia, joined German forces.</p> <p>Was told people were jubilant.</p>
4	<p>War: 1939, father and friends volunteered for the German Army, soon wounded and stationed in nearby Reichenberg. Good contact was possible throughout the war years.</p>
5	<p>Identity: Parents- grandparents: Old</p>

	<p>Imperial Austrians till 1918, after that German Bohemians, were officially called Czechoslovaks of German Nationality. Had to get a birth certificate to be able to marry in 1965, Czechs sent it czechified as Jan Novotny for Hans Nowotny, but father had documentary proof of our forebears' German way of writing their name and got the documents in his original name from Germany.</p>
6	<p>End of War-Pre Expulsion</p> <p>At the beginning of 1945 a trek of Latvian refugees with horses came through our village, grandmother accommodated a woman and child, they were terrified of the Russians and soon moved on. School was suspended and people anxiously listened to the radio for news, when Hitler's death was announced every shop window had a placard in the window which read, 'he lived, fought and died for us'.</p> <p>After 8 May Russians drove through our village in armoured vehicles. Then columns of prisoners were chased past our house in the main street of our village. They were hit with rifle butts and kicked in the heels to speed them up. There were rapes, the farmers leader of our village was killed, I witnessed a German soldier being publically beaten to death by Czech partisans in the market square, something I have never forgotten. A neighbour and son had to dig their graves and were shot into it, because an SS uniform was found in their house which a German soldier had left. My father chronicled the names of people shot and hanged and those who committed suicide. (enclosed with correspondence)</p> <p>Women would stay clothed all night and sit together in terrified groups, speaking softly, encouraging one another. My 22 year old aunt and a friend hid in a hayloft covered by hay. Russian soldiers went from house to house, taking what they wanted, many had several watches on their arms.</p> <p>Father was held by Americans who sent him to a Czech camp with fellow German soldiers. There only half of them survived sustained beatings and torture. He managed to flee and eventually found us in Saxony. But would not stay in the Russian zone and organised for us to join up in the western sector. We crossed the border on foot near Leipzig, and after staying in the gigantic refugee camp Friedland ended up in Westphalia.</p>
7	<p>Expulsion: June 1946 onwards, first wave of expulsions, 6 weeks after Hitler's death. Told the evening before transportation. Our elderly neighbours hanged themselves and set the farm on fire. Remember looking at the burnt remains of the farm.</p> <p>Second wave of expulsion: no longer told the evening before, we were informed at 10 to be at the town hall for 14.00 with 30kg luggage ready to be transported. Pregnant mother with three young children and grandmother, walking with difficulty, with an open venous ulcer and 22 year old aunt. Savings books were immediately taken away, There were mainly old men and women and mothers and children. Difficult for the old folks to clamber into buses, then crammed onto open coal wagon. In the rain to the German border where the heavily armed Czech train-attendants again helped themselves to what they liked from peoples' luggage. Nobody had any idea where we were being transported to, I was completely unaware of the tragedy of the situation, thought this was quite interesting, but people cried, so I started to get worried. No toilet, mother had a pot with her which circulated among the rest of the people.</p> <p>We really only had what we wore and could carry, pregnant mother was not able to take much. Off-loaded on a straight road in the middle of nowhere in the German Soviet sector. Told by Russian female soldiers to march towards villages in the distance. Everybody had to try and find somewhere to sleep, thankfully it was warm. Mother totally exhausted, always sat down by the road crying and kept saying we would have to go 'into the water' [i.e into the Elbe where many families ended their lives. The banks were strewn with adult and childrens clothing for weeks afterwards] We despaired, eventually aunt held up a senior Russian officer's vehicle and asked for help. We were given accommodation in the local youth hostel where the 6 of us were given a room, we slept on the floor covered in straw, rather than having to sleep in the sports hall. There I saw dead people for the first time, witnessed the dead being carried out every morning, mainly weak old people.</p> <p>There was no food, and hunger was a constant problem. Going begging in the villages was useless as the place was flooded with starving people and the villagers had nothing to give. I slipped illegally back over the</p>

	border and found a shop where I told my story and was given two loaves. I decided to tell the Czech frontier guard and he let me through warning me not to do that too often. Back in Saxony my 5 year old sister and I went from house to house begging, singing German folk songs, people liked that and once a farmer's wife got up from her meal and let me finish it, another time a farmer gave me pig-swill which I wolfed down, it was the first time for a long time that I could eat to my hearts content. The farmer laughed as he watched me. My mother gave birth to our sister in September, fortunately all the problems did not seem to have had any negative consequences and all was well with mother and child. With winter approaching my aunt and I slipped back over the Czech border and reached our old village. We were given official permission to stay for 14 days. Our and Grandma's house were already occupied by Czechs but the remaining Germans gave us lots of clothing for the baby and winter clothing for the rest of the family, which we took back. The family were overjoyed.
8	New Home Ended up in Westphalia , the burger-master found us accommodation in an old farmhouse with one elderly man, the owner, living there. Reluctant at first to share his house with all of us but very nice later. Father started a rope-making production unit in the hall of the farm-house there, we had a firm home base again and by 1947, the hungry times were over. Not many Sudeten Germans there, mainly refugees from West and East Prussia, Pomerania and Silesia. We were accepted by the locals Started school and soon made friends there.
9	Postwar- new world-order We hoped to be able to go back home while still in Saxony, even went back to Rochlitz illegally and managed to get baby -clothes for the newborn. Life in the 'Free West' was difficult. Collected leftovers from the harvest in the fields around us to add to the very low ration allowances.
10	Missing Gablonz, old home, what?.
11	Integration: I had missed a lot of school so had to catch up, fellow pupils and teachers were very understanding. From the age of 8 I started to deliver papers and got to know a lot of people who were nice to me.
12	Feelings about old home region today? The old 'Heimat' in Northern Bohemia mattered a great deal to my parents and me too. Though father was almost beaten to death by Czech nationalists, he always said, those criminals were a minority. Later we often travelled back to the old home region but we, as Germans were always grateful to have escaped Communism and to be able to return to West Germany. Came to Neugablonz at 17 and found the old customs and the dialect there again. From the 1970s it became noticeable that the younger generation started to become like the rest of the people in the Bavarian host region.

QUESTIONNAIRE 2

(30 Questions probing emotions supplemented by Questionnaire 4 in a follow-up interview)

1	Temperament: Pre expulsion: Happy, untroubled, active Post expulsion: Different. Marked by the will to survive
2	What was difficult? Pre Exp.: The despair, people talking about their disaster and crying.

	During exp: The inhuman treatment, hunger, no home
3	Able to speak about your feelings? With all family members
4	Suppressed feelings? No
5	Whom did you not wish to burden? ----
6	Encouragement? Parents, relations, friends, religion, 'Heimat' meetings and festivities.
7	Distractions? Child – Adult. Don't think, I was ever truly distracted from my experiences.
8	Homesick? How long? No Had so many shocking experiences, was glad to have got away from my old 'Heimat'
9	Sad? What about, as Child-Adult? -----
10	Loss of Childhood? Yes, very much so, my childhood ended at 7.
11	Adjusting to the new circumstances. No problems
12	What did you get used to? What never? No problems
13	Old-new home, positive-negative. No problems
14	The challenges of post-war Germany? Reactions? No problems
15	Reactions today? Unfortunately always impatient.
16	Family life after Exp.? Our motto was always to be there for the family, to help one another. Before and after.
17	Reason for later capability? The experience of having become successful and having won the fight not to starve.
18	Times of Depression etc.? No
19	Traumatized or burdened (belastet)? No
20	Aware of people who failed to cope? Many committed suicide, could not cope with their experiences, others were completely crushed by being uprooted, could not cope mentally and physically. Many died early. My 82 year old grandmother was expelled separately and died a few days after reaching Germany, we never knew what had happened to her.
21	Past still relevant? My view of the world was changed forever, so was I.
22	What is no longer relevant for you? Hatred, revenge, compensation.
23	How would your life be, had the break not happened? If the Germans had stayed, we would have had a wonderful homeland. But after the break things went uphill for us, down-hill for them. We are happy in Bavaria.
24	Retired, content with life in Germany? Yes
25	Positive aspects of the break in your life? We could be Germans in Germany, not everybody is aware of that.
26	Hatred of the Czechs? No, both populations would have reasons..
27	Your opinion re the Czechs today? They should apologise just as the Germans have and abolish the Benes decrees.
28	Ever witnessed brutal acts? Though father was almost beaten to death by Czech nationalists, he always said, those criminals were a minority. I witnessed a German soldier being beaten to death in the market place which shocked me and has remained with me ever since. There were rapes and a neighbour and son had to dig their graves and were shot into it, because an SS uniform was found in their house which a German soldier had left. In a camp my father was nearly beaten to death by Czech nationalists, just for being a German soldier.
29	How did you find out about atrocities? Father spoke rarely about it but when he did he did so emphatically.
30	Your reactions to NS crimes? -----

QUESTIONNAIRE 3

(10 Questions about inter-war grievances as remembered from parents' and grandparents comments)

a	School, Kindergartens, closures? Yes, aunt had to walk a long way to a German school
b	Job, Pension loss or difficulties, sackings? -----
c	Pressure to give Czechs priority? Yes. Postal services, railways, administration, important offices, state jobs were now staffed by Czechs. People were very cross. German schools were closed. Uncle, b.1882, suffered a lot after the loss of the Monarchy, in the 50s we once went to Austria and he said 'Now I am home.'
d	Interference in business matters? -----
e	Obligatory to learn –speak perfect Czech? One had to speak Czech, people lost their jobs. Still remembered exchanges of children between families (1Year) even in the interwar period, to learn one another's language. A left-over from Habsburg times]
f	Retraining change of career necess.? No, family self-employed
g	Currency reform? -----
h	Landreform -----
i	Higher taxes -----
j	Irritations?. -----

QUESTIONNAIRE 4

(26 Questions, follow-up interview on emotional issues)

1	Single, married? Married
2	No father? Came back from the war.
3	New Beginning, stress? Yes, always wanted to help family, delivered newspapers, 4 children. Starving, went to bed hungry. Worked for farmers to get extra food, collected harvest debris in the fields.
4	New Beginning, successful? Father: Rope-making business in Westphalia with ERP credit. Came to Neugablonz at 17, as a qualified interpreter for English, then successful in running an export business.
5	Effect on you? Very ambitious,
6	Mainly good – bad experiences? Good
7	Which periods?
8	Religious? Yes., Catholic, it was support.
9	Shy, negative, reserved? No
10	Preferring own company? No, but can be on my own.
11	Sociable or prefers to be alone? Like company
12	Positive, insistent, (impatient)? Yes, all of that
13	Wanting to lead, give directions? Yes, led youth groups, member of Alpine Club.
14	Any special foibles, obsessions? Punctuality, being exact, cleanliness, order. Often not listening to others.
15	Collecting, not throwing anything away – getting rid of things, wanting everything new? Writing articles about arts and crafts objects
16	Aversions? Relaxed
17	Worries? Coming from a settled home, ending up with nothing, having to beg. Residual background worries about finances always there. Heart op.
18	Deep seated anxieties? Always remembering pregnant mother sitting at the edge of the road with her 3

	children, crying.
19	Deep seated rage? Against the Czechs who committed atrocities, witnessed.
20	Aims when young? To reach great heights, be successful, be better than average. To create a good life out of nothing.
21	Later: Also the same in the business, successful 'Geschaeftsfuehrer' [company secretary] of a Neugablonz exporting business, business qualifications, interpreter's diploma.
22	In retirement? Fully stretched with family.
23	Reaction to the study? Positive
24	Surprise? -----
25	Pleased? -----
26	Best to forget everything? Everything is like goods, has a monetary value. (H:???)

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QUESTIONNAIRE 1

(12 Questions on history remembered, supplemented by Questionnaire 3 in a follow-up interview)

1	Family, original home situation, Childhood: Happy, content, untroubled. Lived in farmhouse shared by parents, grandparents, brother and myself. Garden, meadows, fields and woodland. Grandfather: Carpenter. Parents: in metal craft for jewellery industry. Mother tayloress. Wanted to build their own house Few Czechs, no problems, Father in cycling club with other Czechs, no disagreements.
2	1918-38? -----
3	Annexation ? Reich Germans were not very popular. Parents and grandparents had an idea that there were unpleasant goings-on but did not talk about it, possibly because of fear. Father had joined the NS party, more for convenience than conviction. Mother was asked to join, which would have entailed all sorts of duties to help with the war effort. She flew into a rage and vehemently refused as she and grandparents had to cope with the farm and young children while father was away as a serving soldier.
4	War: Nobody in our family believed the war could be won..
5	Identity: Parents and grandparents-German Bohemians.
6	End of War, Pre-Expulsion: Soldier uncle dead. Summer 1945, Russians searched the house, afterwards there was no linen and clothing left in wardrobes. My parents had to wait for transport. In an outhouse, had no concept of the future. Not allowed to go to school, I was spat at in the street, aunt had to work for a Czech and was fed on pig swill. Forbidden to go to school. Had to step off the pavement for Czechs, get pushed to the back of the queue, faced with hostile behaviour.
7	Expulsion: year? 1946. Had no idea what was happening but since all friends had gone I did not mind. No idea of the future. 1948 aunt and her husband and grandparents also came to Bavaria. I considered some Czechs really evil, but others were really nice, gave us milk and wanted to send us a Christmas parcel to Germany, Czech post office refused to send it. The Germans lived in fear, were desperate, but I got the impression, they accepted their fate. Some were glad to get away, having been stripped of all possessions, father did not want to work for Czechs any more.

	<p>We were allowed 25kg but did not have anything left, the Russians had taken it all. One wooden chest had a double bottom, hid savings books, photos, camera. Bedding, cooking utensils and clothes were important, but had no clothes left. The guards at the camp, men and women, would just help themselves.</p> <p>Had to leave toys and dolls house which I would have liked to take. An aunt came to the camp. She wanted to bring us slippers but was chased away with rifles. I greatly missed my other grandparents and aunts who ended up in the DDR. Also the neighbour, my friend.</p> <p>After 2 days in the camp we were loaded into a cattle wagon with many wooden crates and people. The doors were closed and it was dark, one could sense the fear of the adults. Some time later the doors were opened, A baby, which had died was just laid down on the railway embankment.</p>
8	<p>New Home?</p> <p>Once we had arrived in Bavaria, the relief was palpable though our 'Heimat' was lost. We ended up in a factory in Augsburg, there was food and drink with bunk-beds and children could be bathed. Next Sunday the Bishop of Augsburg read mass</p> <p>Then we were taken to barracks where nobody wanted us. The first night was spent in the hall of a pub, it was way below zero and the window panes were broken.</p> <p>Then we and another man were allocated two rooms. Soon after</p> <p>father went to Kaufbeuren and we were able to follow. We were free again, found new friends.</p> <p>Parents were occasionally sad, so was I. Compared to what we had left behind, we now lived in one of the barracks, 2 rooms often with 7 people. Not enough to eat to start off with. 'Daheim' we had enough to eat, here we had only what was in the packing cases, that was difficult. I did not find it too bad, the other children were in the same boat.</p> <p>Mother took work in, father soon found a job. One wanted to get on, a 12 hour day was the norm.</p> <p>School? Girls-school Kaufbeuren. Very nice nuns teaching us, refugees as they called us, we were a group, Sister Michaela took us to the convent for extra tuition in reading and there was also soup. The next school was the 'barracks school' in Hart, the later Neugablonz. Teachers from 'home' One young teacher suddenly stopped coming, we later learnt, she could not bear the deprivation of the children. We did not see it that way.</p>
9	<p>Postwar- new world-order? Negative: Whole families were torn apart. There were relations around but many were scattered all over Germany in the DDR and Austria. But soon community life restarted with young people also involved, e.g. carnival balls, 'Heimat' festivities, Turnverein, music band, choir etc.</p> <p>Positive: things were getting better, the future was judged to be positive, a 12 hour day was the norm.</p> <p>Atrocities: not talked about much, both sides made mistakes.</p>
10	<p>Missing Gablonz, old home, what? Farmhouse with wonderful surroundings. Loved our life in the extended family there was always somebody around and my friend lived next doors. Grandma often took me to her friends, was happy. Still cooking dishes from the old 'Heimat', like Oma did. Not much changed after our arrival in Bavaria, which is not that different</p>
11	<p>Integration: Quickly got used to the new environment, probably because of my age, things in Neugablonz seemed to run almost like 'zu Hause' (at home)</p> <p>Don't miss anything here but still get homesick occasionally.</p>
12	<p>Feelings about old home region today? Like it here, but sometimes don't quite know where I belong.</p>

QUESTIONNAIRE 2

(30 Questions probing emotions supplemented by Questionnaire 4 in a follow-up interview)

1	Temperament: pre expulsion: happy untroubled, afterwards more troubled
2	What was difficult? During expulsion? The transport in cattle-wagon particularly difficult. Found the prevailing mood of the adults a burden.
3	Able to speak about your feelings? No, not at all
4	Suppressed feelings? In our family one did not speak about feelings, especially with a child. Only through my children did I learn to allow my feelings to show.
5	Whom did you not wish to burden? Parents but spoke with my family later.
6	Encouragement, soothing, comforting influences? Circle of friends, social contacts. 'Heimat' themed occasions once they started again.
7	Distractions? Friends: were all from our original home area. Leisure activities: As an adult: job, family.
8	Homesick? Ongoing
9	Sad? What about, as Child-Adult? To lose original friends and many family members, who ended up elsewhere. A major regret is never to have been back, family did not want that and going by myself seems pointless as I don't remember much.
10	Loss of Childhood? Mine not comparable to the childhood of my children and grandchildren, but I am very happy they grew up untroubled.
11	Adjusting to the new circumstances. Easily, everyone was in the same boat. But I still don't quite know where I belong.
12	What did you get used to easily? Can't say
13	Old-new home, positive-negative. New one: positive
14	The challenges of post-war Germany? Positive, ever upward progress. Reactions? Many years of nightmares. Rage and annoyance.
15	Reactions today? Quite relaxed and tolerant.
16	Family life after Exp.? Nothing but work, even on Sundays. Not too much time for one another.
17	Reason for later capability? One had observed parents and grandparents who had had a lot of bad luck in their lives and had time and again soldiered on trying to make the best of things.
18	Times of Depression etc.? Nightmares and sadness.
19	Traumatised or burdened (belastet)? Not really
20	Aware of people who failed to cope? Yes
21	Past still relevant? Yes, I engage with it
22	What is no longer relevant for you? To be ashamed to be German
23	How would your life be, had the break not happened? Can't say
24	Retired, content with life in Germany? Yes, though hard at first, proud about what we had achieved.
25	Positive aspects of the break in your life? We could grow up being free.
26	Hatred of the Czechs? No, but could not understand them, family, yes.
27	Your opinion re the Czechs today? It is so long ago. Had a conversation with Czechs in Marienbad, they expressed regret. But an unpleasant feeling remains.
28	Ever witnessed brutal acts? No
29*	How did you find out about atrocities?
30	Your reactions to NS crimes? Kept thinking about it

QUESTIONNAIRE 3

(10 Questions about inter-war grievances as remembered from parents' and grandparents comments)

a	German Schools, Kindergartens, closures?
b	Jobs, Pension loss or difficulties, sackings?

c	Pressure to give Czechs priority?
d	Cz. Interference in business matters?
e	Obligatory to learn –speak perfect Czech? Mother learnt Czech voluntarily
f	Retraining, change of career necess.?
g	Currency reform?
h	Land Reform
i	Higher taxes for Germans?
j	Irritations?

QUESTIONNAIRE 4

(26 Questions, follow-up interview on emotional issues)

1	Single, married Divorced? Separated? Married
2	No father? Father came back from the war.
3	New Beginning, stress? Worked day and night, bank loan and borrowed from family to build house.
4	New Beginning,successful? Yes
5	Effect on you? Parents: little time for children, old friendships abruptly severed, new ones with Bavarians and Gablonzers. Partial normality but frequent return of sadness.
6	Mainly good – bad experiences in life? Mainly good
7*	Which periods? During the construction of Neugablonz, great games round the dynamited concrete boulders in the woods, always crowds of children playing hide and seek, Red Indians, Cops and Robberr...
8	Religious? Yes
9	Shy, negative, reserved? Reserved
10	Preferring own company? No
11	Sociable or prefers to be alone? Sociable
12	Positive, insistent, (impatient)? Positive, sometimes impatient.
13	Wanting to lead, give directions? Just wanting to please everybody, to get things right.
14	Any special foibles, obsessions? Punctuality
15	Collecting, not throwing anything away – getting rid of things, wanting everything new? Targeted when shopping, not wanting to throw things away, food is used up. Collected Hummel figures.
16	Aversions?
17	Worries? No
18	Deep seated anxieties? Huge shock after father's death, triggered panic attacks, depression, needed therapy.
19	Deep seated annoyance? Mother always preferred brother.
20*	Aims when young? Wanted to be a forestry employee.
21	Later? Business training. Accounting in export business. Also 'Guertlerin' (making metal frames for jewellery)
22	In retirement? To travel to Sweden and Norway.
23	Reaction to the study? Very positive, liked working on it, meant a lot to me.
24	Surprise about media interest? As below
25	Pleased? That the subject is being looked at.
26	Best to forget everything? No, interested in the historical roots.

QUESTIONNAIRE 1

(12 Questions on history remembered, supplemented by Questionnaire 3 in a follow-up interview)

1	<p>Childhood? Was a happy, untroubled child Grandparents in service when young, poor. Grandfather employee in the jewellery industry after WW1 in the Social Services. 12 children. 3 aunts still alive. Family partly Catholic and Lutheran. Until expulsion, parents: father, head of department in export company, mother also in that industry and worked at home for it as well. 3 siblings. After birth of the children, they rented small house and garden in village outside Gablonz. Nice family life till 1940 when father was called up, very sad to have to leave family behind. House too far from Gablonz to get help from relations if needed, children had almost all the childhood diseases. Long way to school for sister, up the mountain, particularly in winter. My kindergarten nearer. Knew of no mixed marriages but many half Czechs with Czech mothers had German names so it was not obvious who one went to school with.</p>
2	<p>1918-38? Some aunts were still at school, and had social contacts with Czechs. Got on well with everybody, nobody was discriminated against. One lived peacefully and got along well with the Czechs of Gablonz. But there was always the desire for a German Sudetenland to be separate and independent from the Czech government. The younger ones were cross, they had to learn Czech at school.</p>
3	<p>Annexation? According to Parent generation: One still got on well with the Czechs inspite of being part of the Reich. But Sudeten people saw themselves differently, not as Reich Germans, though it helped to rid them of Czech domination. People were overjoyed. Had no idea about the persecution of Jews. Men were expected to join the party, which they did, many not being active, father did not and was not pressured.</p>
4	<p>War? Marriages between Czechs and Germans still took place. Father hardly ever spoke about the war. Heard from others he was prisoner in France and he, like the others lived in holes in the ground there on starvation rations, many died, wondered how he survived. Mother must have had a hard time with father in the war. Alone with three small children in an isolated village, kids often ill, no phone. But Hitler did make sure the population was fed and mothers had enough to care for their families, also were helped by 'duty girls'. Starvation after the end of the war, everyone had to try and get by somehow.</p>
5	<p>Identity? Our grandparents and parents very much regretted being in a Czech state instead of the old Austria, they and their siblings always felt themselves culturally to be Altoesterreicher. Bohemians spoke Austrian German with the Austrian words for certain foods etc..</p>
6	<p>End of War-Pre Expulsion? Gablonz Czechs did not create trouble for us, did not throw German people out of their houses, only those who came from outside. From 8 May 1945, not allowed to go to the kindergarten, sister not allowed to go to school. Was not allowed to speak German in the street. Germans had to wear white bands on their sleeves. I heard about abuse of Germans, could not understand what was going on, nobody explained things to me. 3 aunts were dragged off to do hard agricultural work for Czechs in the interior, some at least provided enough food. Soldiers returning (mostly from the Russian front) were immediately interned and put to work in the mines. Some would be chased into the reservoir behind the huge dam across the valley. Don't think any one came out alive.??? (anectotal)</p>
7	<p>Expulsion? The Czech who was going to take over our house just wanted one room, allowed us to stay till we were taken to the holding camp. April 1946, before transport in a cattle wagon. 50kg. luggage. Mother managed to hide a lot of valuables with a sister in Gablonz with a half Jewish husband, they could stay. Many people buried things, thought, they would be able to return. My 8 year old sister had</p>

	<p>been ill and died of diphtheria at Xmas 1945 just as we were to be deported and mother was packing things. She collapsed with grief, then just run around crying that she could not leave without her child. I too was diagnosed with diphtheria and as I had been in bed next to my sister and witnessed her death, I was in deep shock, kept feeling my heart-beat, frightened it would stop too. Relations came and took over with the packing, my mother was not going to leave without her child. Nobody took any notice of me. This experience has marked me forever, it is burnt into my heart and mind. As I write the memory it is like a film rolling, everything is still crystal-clear.</p> <p>We had no concept of the future, also did not have any news about father. I did not understand what was happening.</p> <p>Father was released to Hessen, in the western zone, was warned not to go back home.</p> <p>Many Germans were glad to leave in the end. Some people we knew were forced to stay. First thrown out of their house given a tiny flat. Jewellery shop confiscated and previous owner just allowed to be a worker in his own shop, at minimal wages.</p> <p>Rumour in the camp, eat as little as poss. food poisoned with arsenic. Aunt kept bringing us food, she spoke fluent Czech.</p> <p>Mother took mainly clothing and essentials, I took one doll but had to leave my beloved dolls-pram behind. Always wished for another one in the new home but was never again given one. Later when my brother's baby girl was born this was the first present I gave her.</p> <p>Transport in cattle wagon, brother in pram, we were sitting on packing cases, don't know how we slept. Toilet, hole in the corner, had to climb over people and luggage to get there. There was just a narrow opening towards the top of the waggon. At one stop (Furth am Walde) American soldiers threw us food, probably chocolate and biscuits, but they were in a train too far away, we could not reach it, we were not allowed out.</p> <p>3 days later we were turfed out in the middle of nowhere near a tiny village in Hessen. We had to wait on the station for a whole day, while mother went looking for accommodation.</p>
8	<p>New Home Mother found us sleeping quarters in the completely overcrowded house of the mayor, in his bedroom. Glad to be able to sleep two per bed. Mother found father who had been released nearby in Buchenau. He could play the cello, had joined a small orchestra and played in a cafe. People had lent him clothes and a cello. Slept every day in different rooms, with members of the orchestra, nowhere to accommodate us all. Slept on the floor on blankets until Mayor found us a room with a widow, who did not want us at first but soon realised we were decent people, sad when we left for Kaufbeuren after 3 months. We got to know people round about and were welcomed into their community we played with the children. I went to school, very overcrowded class rooms, refugees and expellee outnumbered locals. Don't remember any unpleasantness from the locals. Still remember some fellow pupils. Father had found work in a saw mill. We therefore had food and a roof above our heads. But no relations nearby. Started to get used to the place but only rekindled old friendships 60 years later (visited Kassel Scout jamboree), found some very nice people again. Now often drive there, feel more at home there than in Kaufbeuren.</p> <p>Via flyers we got to know about Gablonz people re-grouping in Kaufbeuren to re-start the old jewellery industries.</p> <p>Moved to Kaufbeuren, June 1946, after we got the document giving official permission [not easily obtained].</p> <p>Accommodation in a school class-room, double bunk-beds in 5 tiers, slept with the parents, did not get own beds. Then after school started again, beds in gymnasium, 2 persons per bed, sometimes strangers.</p>

	<p>Then accommodation in barracks, One large room, approx 30 m². Parents sat on the packing case, we had two stools which father had made at the saw mill. As we sat there wondering where to sleep, somebody from the Kaufbeuren town admin. came and said, 'is that all you have got?' Go to one of the end-barracks, there are old military bedsteads and straw mattresses. What joy! With some effort we dragged them into our room and slept as in seventh heaven. I shall never forget that feeling of happiness. We were promised to be given a flat in six weeks but it took 6 years. Kaufbeuren had 11 000 inhabitants and an additional 10 000 expellees and refugees and more kept coming. The municipality built apartment blocks but it took time.</p> <p>The children soon made friends, played together and almost all went to one school, where we used to make up half of the pupils in each class. After school there was the division between children from the barracks and those from Kaufbeuren. We were often regarded as gypsies. As we were always together, we spoke our dialect and there were difficulties with communication. We did not integrate till much later, but never totally. But Kaufb. children also came up to us, found life in the barracks interesting and also played in the woods with us.</p> <p>Children of families accommodated in the villages in the countryside around Kaufbeuren integrated much quicker and soon acquired the local dialect</p> <p>Food? A well-off lady from Kaufbeuren started a kitchen for the refugees, soon helpers joined and hundreds of meals were cooked, originally mainly potatoes but we got warm food every lunchtime. The Americans also donated food to the school and my mother went into the farming villages and begged for bread and butter. We got Care packets which my mother sent to our relations stranded in the Communist sector, the DDR, as she thought they had even less.</p> <p>The Americans founded a youth centre where there were many opportunities to engage in sensible and useful pursuits like handicrafts and carpentry. Sometimes there would be sweets and chewing gum, did not know what to do with that.</p>
9	<p>Postwar- new world-order</p> <p>Father got work as a manager in a new firm founded by two others, one had previously been the boss of a big firm in Gablonz and had addresses of customers sewn into his military coat. But the firm did not thrive in spite of some state subsidies, money was tight.</p> <p>Gradually the people from the old area, districts and villages formed associations and groups within the Sudetendeutsche Landsmannschaft. One met old acquaintances again and generally life did not seem so bad any more. We children did not suffer too much during our time in the barracks. There was no envy as we were all in the same boat, parents helped one another out and lent things to one another. One would have a big pan, the other a large wash tub. Parents had a lot to deal with, we children had it easier, spent most of our free time outside and enjoyed our freedom.</p> <p>People did not seem to dwell on Nazi times, it was a new start, one had to get on with it in the new 'Heimat' in the new Germany. Gradually, as people realised they would never return, their energies were directed towards finding work, starting up businesses, building houses and coping as best as possible. Many were very sad about their loss of 'Heimat' and relations still left in the CSR, who were much worse off than we were.</p>
10	<p>Missing Gablonz, old home, what? Was a happy, untroubled child. I loved our family life, being cared for and cherished and having a large extended family, lots of relations to visit and visiting us. Neighbours were very nice, never witnessed any quarrelling. Pity we lost contact with all our former neighbours, all dispersed, some were in Austria or Northern Germany, no information about others. Can't remember favourite foods, Bohemian Austrian cuisine, mother cooked simple food, rarely meat or sausages.</p>
11	<p>Integration? Not in 'barrack' times, surrounded by our own people, after 10 years at school, could partially converse in the local dialect as well. Then worked for 11 years in the office of a jewellery</p>

	<p>business, again with our own people, later more or less together again in the newly built apartment blocks.</p> <p>Never really integrated, feel a Bavarian Sudeten German. Feel almost at home in Neugablonz as here the mentality of the people, the language and cultural climate is what I am used to. Some family members eventually also came to live in Neugablonz.</p> <p>Missing the old house, the old surroundings and Lser mountains.</p>
12	<p>Feelings about old home region today? Means a lot to me, my roots are there, know the ways and by-ways but find it strange that the people there now speak a different language. I visited recently. Walked everywhere, looked at the Kindergarten spot, now a new house, the school my sister attended, her grave in the overgrown cemetery, our old house. Some of the old houses are very nicely kept, others have fallen down or been demolished. Felt very melancholic. In my mind I saw us play in the garden, relations sitting on a bench, saw myself on the toboggan in the snow, imitating my sister jumping across the brook but landing in it. Took two pebbles with me. Walked slowly and very deliberately along the Neisse back to the Hotel in Gablonz, looking at everything, trying to absorb and retain it all. Mother, my brother and sister and I often walked here, about 1 ½ hrs to Gablonz Did not want to leave.</p>

QUESTIONNAIRE 2

(30 Questions probing emotions supplemented by Questionnaire 4 in a follow-up interview)

1	<p>Temperament?</p> <p>Happy, active, pre-expulsion, then nervous in dark closed rooms. Fear of death, of eating anything at strangers' or even at friends' places. Fear of a new war, having to leave and losing everything again.</p>
2	<p>What was difficult? Pre-Exp. Did not grasp anything at the time.</p>
3	<p>Able to speak about your feelings? No. Mother could not forget my dead sister, lots of worries after exp. I felt overlooked. Did not want to burden her.</p>
4	<p>Suppressed feelings? Worried whether my parents still loved me but dared not ask. Tried to be as good and obedient a child as possible to spare them more worries.</p> <p>Always wanted to be a kindergarten teacher, but had to work in an office, a situation I disliked intensely. My brother was supposed to go to university, there was no money to pay for my training. After 7 or 8 years I could still have done the training and would easily have found a job. But I had to carry on earning, my father's business had gone bankrupt so I was the only breadwinner in the family at the time. 11 years later I was still doing office work which I hated more and more, but did not dare to confide in anyone. Only after I had a nervous breakdown, and was able to tell the doctor that it was all to do with my work, rather than something to do with being disappointed in love, as he thought, did I tell my parents. He advised I had to get out of that office at once and I slowly got well again. I subsequently trained and worked with disabled children.</p>
5	<p>Whom did you not wish to burden? Unable to hurt either my mother or brother.</p>
6	<p>Encouragement? Via religion in Lutheran girl scout movement. Gave me the comfort and strength to get through difficult times. To this day I have people from the movement and a lady pastor who is there for me when I need help.</p>
7	<p>Distractions? Child – Adult. Joined the girl-scout movement at eleven, this distracted me from my anxieties, particularly re. the inability to eat food with strangers caused by the arsenic in food rumour going back to the time in the camp and the transport. As we cooked our meals on camp-fires and all ate together I could relax. During times of depression I got great comfort from being an active member in our church and working in my later job with disabled children. Also after the disappointment of my divorce.</p>

8	Homesick? How long? I am not actually homesick for the old home area as there are different people there now. I have grown some roots in Neugablonz, an enclave of former expellees and refugees. We even have our traditional foods available here, the mentality and culture is the same.
9	Sad? What about, as Child-Adult? As a child post exp.: sad about the loss of my dolls pram and toys. Having to wear second hand clothing. Got my first dress at 14 for confirmation. Very sad that grandparents were now in Thuringia (DDR), the other grandma in Holstein and most of the others were scattered all over the place and one could not visit easily. Also sad I could not go on camping trips with the scouts, as we had no money early on. Adult sadness: missing our relations, sad during the 11 years in a hated job. Also that I never found a good partner to share my life with. While training for the new job I had to leave my mother who started to suffer with depression and died, then father retired and I could not be with him. Brother had got married and moved away, Sister in law did not take to me. Once father had died I was all on my own again and yearned to be able to share my life with someone. As everyone around me started to have children I was sad, I had none though I loved children. All along I suffered from depression, guilt feelings also about my divorce after just one year as I was religious. Spent in all 13 years hospitalised being treated for depression, had to give up work at 48. Now I was all alone again. Tablets and God's help had led me back to a 'normal' life. Realised my brother's wife did not like me and brother on her side, feel left out and alone, but niece is not anti me. Would like to feel part of the family but feel unwanted. Just sad, very often, frequent heart-trouble, could there be a connection? Broken Heart?
10	Loss of Childhood? Not really. Had glorious surroundings in the woods and river Wertach and wonderful games, also caring parents. Had to become grown-up and self-reliant at 35 after parents had died. Felt all alone ever since.
11	Adjusting to the new circumstances. In Hessen we were accepted as equals at school and I felt comfortable there. In Kaufbeuren we were looked at as gypsies, there were two groups at school, the natives and we. As we were so many we stuck together and did not integrate. To this day there are people in Kaufbeuren who don't like us and who have never been to Neugablonz, a district of the town since the last war (It was also referred to as the Ghetto, 6F40 Hofmann) People started to integrate more at high-school.
12	What did you get used to? What never? We got all the street names from the old villages round Gablonz and have got the 'Ruediger' a monument from Old Gablonz, so I feel almost at home.
13	Old-new home, positive-negative. Can't really make comparisons, positive re. old home: we were all the same people, had our families all in one place. Positive re. new home: we were amongst people where we could speak German again, over time people tried to get to know one another's dialects Negative: We are still two distinct and different ethnic groups here.
14	The challenges of post-war Germany? Reactions? Tried to cope and not give up, have fighting spirit. Good family support and the scout movement helped
15	Reactions today? Am fairly tolerant but get cross about myself. If I have made a mistake and about people who are insufferable.
16	Family life after Exp.? After father came back from the war – normal family life. Mother did work at home like sewing buttons onto cards or fix ear-rings to holders, we helped too, Father worked in the Gablonz industries, played cello at church, weddings and gave lessons. But money was always tight, we were not rich but we got by and had a normal family life..
17	Reason for later capability? Don't feel I coped well, fell several times down a black hole into depression, 18 years in all. Reasons: hated office job, mother's and father's death, divorce from an inconsiderate man, who had not married me for love, brother's family does not include me.
18	Times of Depression, homesickness etc.? Yes, at 11 in a children's holiday home I was terribly

	homesick. Was skinny and expected to eat heavy fatty food which revolted me, was constantly sick, ended up with gastric problems, thinner than I had been at the beginning of the holiday. Constantly wanted to run away but had not got the nerve to.
19	Traumatised or burdened ('belastet')? Yes, to this day, going back to the three days in the dark cattle wagon. Don't like sleeping in total darkness, lifts and small rooms make me feel restricted. As a child I could never eat anything at friends' houses, not even a mouthful as a result of the arsenic rumour in the holding camp. Still have problems with food in foreign countries. Still wash fruit and veg. three times.
20	Aware of people who failed to cope? Nobody apart from me
21	Past still relevant? Very, engage intensively with it. Sad I never asked parents and relations about their opinions and feelings, it might have helped me to understand my life better.
22	What is no longer relevant for you? Have no answer to that.
23	How would your life be, had the break not happened? Think it might have been better, we would not have suffered poverty and deprivation, would have had our large extended family round us, my sister might still be alive, had we had better medical provision, bad on account of political situation. I would not have had to suffer a hated job and have to battle years of depression, though extensive therapy has helped me to cope. Mother would not have developed depression and died relatively early. Still battling against loneliness and sadness every day. Worrying about the steadily decreasing value of my pension
24	Retired, content with life in Germany? No, still feel a stranger here though I am ok with living in Neugablonz, never liked living in Kaufbeuren earlier on.
25	Positive aspects of the break in your life? Could never and cannot now find positive aspects of it
26	Hatred of the Czechs? Parents never mentioned it. As a child I had never heard anything bad to give cause to hatred, I always intuitively made the connection between the war and what happened to us long before I knew the background. But being transported like cattle squashed in the wagon for three days is still with me. Parents wanted to visit the old homeland but mother died before it was possible. I went with father in the early seventies, Czechs had retained Germans once they realised they had not enough people with the same skills, but those Germans all wanted out but could not do so.
27	Your opinion re the Czechs today? After the fall of Communism, the Czech Lutheran church in Gablonz approached our church to strive for mutual understanding, establish friendly and peaceful contact. Since then I have got to know very nice people and have visited frequently. There are now frequent exchanges with groups of young Czechs, which is a good thing. They did not know anything of their history, it had been kept quiet. Many Czechs want reconciliation with us. Many of our old people, even those who suffered badly have forgiven them, but others are unable to do so. There is good and bad in all populations, it just depends on one's experiences, whether one feels aversion or has a willingness for friendship.
28	Ever witnessed brutal acts? No, the opposite. The Czech who got our house just claimed one room, while we were still there, some Russians gave me milk, another one came into our house and put us children on his knee and stroked us lovingly. Probably had children back home.
29	How did you find out about atrocities? People who had witnessed them first hand, newspapers and books. I was shocked and enraged, how could people do such things?
30	Your reactions to NS crimes? Never heard anything, nothing in Czech behaviour pointing towards it before expulsion. Learnt about it at school. Parents were also very upset when they found out about Nazi crimes and what had been going on in the 3 rd Reich. But Sudeten people saw themselves differently, not as members of the Reich, though glad it helped to rid them of Czech domination. Realised the reasons behind Czech hatred, which many could not understand before. I personally could not understand, that Hitler allowed all his power to seduce people into terrible deeds and had ignored Christian sensibilities. Many realised later they had allowed themselves to be manipulated. Unfortunately never asked father to find out whether he just did his duty for his country or did it for Hitler. I am desperately sorry about the things that happened, we are still regarded as the 'nasty Germans'

	generations later, who had nothing to do with it. I can understand the hatred of individual Czech victims of Nazi crimes but not why they should want to punish innocent people. This enraged me.
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QUESTIONNAIRE 3

(10 Questions about inter-war grievances as remembered from parents' and grandparents comments)

a	School, Kindergardens, closures?
b	Job, Pension loss or difficulties, sackings?
c	Pressure to give Czechs priority?
d	Interference in business matters?
e	Obligatory to learn –speak perfect Czech? Yes, for parents.
f	Retraining change of career necessary?
g	Currency reform? Grandparents lost house
h	Landreform?
i	Higher taxes?
j	Irritations? Got on well with Czechs.

QUESTIONNAIRE 4

(26 Questions, follow-up interview on emotional issues)

1	Single, married? Divorced
2	No father post-war? Came back from war.
3	New Beginning, stress? Great efforts
4	New Beginning,successful? ? Finances? Small amount of compensation only. 1946 started up export firm.
5	Effect on you? Very frustrated, could not follow career wish teaching disabled children, brother able to go to university. Hated work in the office. Active in the Scout movement, provided meaningful diversion.
6	Mainly good – bad experiences? Bad ones
7	Which periods? Had to contribute to family finances, also noticed that burden with others leading to depression and trauma.
8	Religious? Mother in a strict protestant sect. No dancing allowed, negative influence.
9	Shy, negative, reserved? Negative outlook
10	Preferring own company? In some ways
11	Sociable or prefers to be alone? Do socialise
12*	Positive, insistent, (impatient)?
13*	Wanting to lead, give directions?
14	Any special foibles, obsessions? Perfectionist, wanting to do everything 100%.
15	Collecting, not throwing anything away – getting rid of things, wanting everything new? Collecting Scout memorabilia, gather newspapers, magazines etc. Constantly trying to catch up with things, always behind my targets, ongoing effort, feel stupid and over- challenged by the electronic age. Single, no adult children to guide and help me.
16	Aversions? When eating food anywhere but own home: is it clean, washed well? Possibly going back to rumours during expulsion times, Czechs supposedly poisoning milk.
17	Worries? Before each meal, even with friends, was forced to eat fat as a child, post-war 5 weeks in a holiday home to put on weight, constantly sick leading to gastric troubles, returned having lost weight.

18	Deep seated anxieties? Food, closed rooms. Inferiority complex. Better once in the Scout movement.
19	Deep seated rage? Family matters, sister in law. Love children, get the feeling I am not wanted in the family.
20	Aims when young? Normal life, family and children
21	Later? Going to Czech Rep. But not on my own, language problems.
22	In retirement? Health worries, shrinking pension.
23	Reaction to the study? Super
24	Surprise? Because only now
25	Pleased? Yes
26	Best to forget everything? No

Life-histories provided in 2011 by the the last generation of witnesses of the German expulsions from Czechoslovakia



The “Liberation” of the Sudetenland

After months of tensions and fear of war, tears of relief (right)



The Czech school in Gablonz (pupils were taught by teachers who did not leave for employment in the Czech interior after the Annexation)

(by permission of Josef Tvzrník)