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**EBREJU GLĀBŠANA LATVIJĀ UN NORVĒGIJĀ
2. PASAULES KARA LAIKĀ**

MAĢISTRA DARBS

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**RESCUE OF JEWS IN LATVIA AND NORWAY
DURING THE WORLD WAR II**

MASTER'S THESIS

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ANOTĀCIJA

Maģistra darba „Ebreju glābšana Latvijā un Norvēģijā 2. Pasaules kara laikā” mērķis ir salīdzināt atšķirīgo praksi situācijās, kas saistītas ar Ebreju glābšanu no iznīcināšanas Hitlera nacistiskā režīma laikā abās minētajās valstīs. Tāpat tiek raksturots un salīdzināts vēsturiskais konteksts abās valstīs, nacistu okupācija, pret ebrejiem vērstās represijas un pētījumi par Holokaustu un ebreju glābējiem pēckara periodā. Darbā tiek arī iepazīstināts ar teorētisko literatūru par atmiņas un vēstures mijiedarbību vēsturiskās situācijas pētniecībā, sevišķi pievēršoties atmiņas un traumas analīzei saistībā ar Holokaustu. Darbā tiek izmantota aprakstošā un salīdzinošā konteksta analīze, izmantojot teorētisko literatūru un personīgās atmiņas, rezultātā veicot analītisku kopsavilkumu par iegūtajiem faktiem. Noslēgumā tiek veidots salīdzinošs pārskats par dažādajiem vēsturiskajiem apstākļiem ebreju glābšanas realizācijā abās minētajās valstīs.

Atslēgas vārdi: *ebreju glābšana, ebreju glābēji, Holokausts, Latvija, Norvēģija, Otrais pasaules karš, nacistiskā okupācija*

ANNOTATION

The aim of the master thesis „Rescue of Jews in Latvia and Norway during the World War II” is to analyse and compare the different situations regarding the rescue of the Jews during the Hitler’s Nazi regime in both countries. Furthermore, the historical context, the Nazi occupation, the repressions against the Jews and studies about the Holocaust and the Jewish rescuers in the post-war period are separately examined and compared. The theoretical part consists of introduction in memory and history studies and the relationship between these two fields when carrying out a historical research, focusing on memory and trauma analysis in the context of the Holocaust. This work is based on descriptive and comparative contextual analysis, which consists of studies of the theoretical literature and personal memories, and the concluding analysis of the gained facts. In the final a comparative overview about different historic conditions during the Jewish rescuing in both countries is generated.

Key words: *Jewish rescue, Jewish rescuers, Holocaust, Latvia, Norway, World War II, Nazi occupation*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DP	Displaced Person
KGB	Committee for State Security, national security agency of the Soviet Union
NKVD	People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs, public and secret police organization of the Soviet Union
NS	Nasjonal Samling (<i>National Gathering</i>) Norwegian Nazi party in 1930s and during the World War II
SD	<i>Sicherheitsdienst</i> , Nazi intelligence agency
SS	<i>Schutzstaffel</i> , major Nazi paramilitary organization
SSR	Soviet Socialistic Republic
USSR	The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

INTRODUCTION

The Holocaust as one of the main tragedies of humanity in the 20th century has influenced several millions of European people and had left an everlasting impact in their memories, irrespective of whether they had been victims, witnesses, bystanders, persecutors or rescuers. Memory is not frozen in the past, it has a strong connection to the present and even may have an impact to the future. Memory is conveyed from one generation to the next and transformed into a narrative form, however, never it continues unaltered.

Memory has been an interest of research in multiple scientific disciplines, including history, anthropology, sociology, psychology, philosophy and politology, and recently also a particular branch of memory studies as a discipline has started to develop. Obviously, one of the most complicated relationships is that between memory and history. Historian and professor of Humanistic studies Dominick LaCapra asserts that “memory poses questions to history in that it points to problems that are still alive or invested with emotions and value”, however, memory itself is imperfect and for a historian memory is a resourceful, albeit not an absolute material when dealing with events in the past. On the other hand, as memory and history are more of the opposition to each other, one should not avoid using both of them when approaching problems of the past which are still “invested with emotions and value”.

Evidently, one of such topics is the extermination of European Jews, carried out by the Hitler’s Nazi regime in Germany during the World War II. Although the whole atrocious industrial killing mechanism and reasons behind it have received much of the attention in history studies, somehow a topic, which casts light on the occurrence of a sincere humanity during the most severe ruthlessness, has not received so much interest. This is the issue about the Jewish rescuers, who risked their lives, often for several years, to provide shelter and food for those in need throughout the years of war.

The aim of this master’s thesis is to find and compare the differences of the Jewish rescuing in Norway and Latvia during the World War II. The research objectives of this master’s thesis are 1) to make an overview of the theoretical literature about memory and history in the aspect of the Holocaust and trauma research, 2) to investigate the conditions of the Jewish rescue in two Nazi occupied European countries – Latvia and Norway, 3) to analyse the context in what circumstances the Holocaust happened in both of them and 4) to make comparative conclusions revealing what were the differences in the Nazi plans and attitudes, the Jewish persecutions and the rescue of the Jews in each of the countries.

The method used in this thesis is descriptive and comparative contextual analysis which consists of studies of the theoretical literature and personal memories, and the analysis of the gained facts and findings.

The actuality and importance of this theme, can be justified in the fact, that at least in Latvia and other Post-Soviet block countries, it has not been researched until the end of the Soviet era because it was prohibited to do so, therefore during the last twenty years many efforts had been put to find out as much as possible about those who selflessly came up against the Nazi regime and had the courage to defend those who were persecuted. In the case of Norway, they succeeded to help around a half of the Jewish population to leave the country but still one of the present questions discussed among the Norwegian historians is – could more Jews have been saved?

The literature on which this thesis is based divides in three parts – the literature about memory and history, literature about the Holocaust and the Jewish rescue in Norway and literature about the Holocaust and the Jewish rescue in Latvia. The first part is based on writings of historian who has devoted much of his work on memory studies of the Holocaust and other trauma victims – Dominick LaCapra. Other authors like Ana Douglas and Thomas A. Vogler, Anna Reading, Nigel Hunt and more have been cited in the chapter about memory and history. The second chapter which introduces the Holocaust and the Jewish rescue in Europe is based on Greenberg's, Rubinstein's, Rittner's and Myer's works as well as much on gathered materials available from *Yad Vashem* – The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes Remembrance Authority. The third part which is devoted to case study of Norway mainly grounds on the Norwegian historians like – Kjeldstadli, Tjelmeland, Bruland. Mendelsohn has particularly written about the Jewish history but Ragnar Ulstein is the most prominent historian who deals with the Jewish rescue in Norway. In the chapter about case of Latvia such authors like Stranga, Ezergailis, Dribins, Vestermanis, Anders, Lumans, Zilbermans have been used to cover the topic. In addition to that unpublished documents and memories about the Jewish rescuers, possessed by the museum "Jews in Latvia", have been used for this research.

This work consists of four chapters with subdivisions, first of it covers the topic of memory and history in the context of trauma and the Holocaust survivors, the second chapter introduces the topic of the Holocaust in Europe and the ways how the Jews were helped and rescued, the third chapter deals with case study of the Holocaust in Norway and the Norwegian assistance in rescuing the Jews, and the fourth section is devoted to the case of the Holocaust in Latvia and the Latvian Jewish rescuers. The thesis is finalized with comparative conclusions about both countries.

1. MEMORY STUDIES

1.1. Introduction to Memory Studies

To generate an overview, which would introduce the topic of memory, witnessing and trauma research, this chapter will outline the basic ideas of the existing research in this field, concentrating on the traumatic memories of the Holocaust in Europe.

Memory has always been an important part of human existence, so the ancient Greeks were the first to regard memory and narrative as an essential part of thought, as well as “the Romans considered the artificial development of memory using highly complex memory systems as one of the main arts of rhetoric”, as Anna Reading describes it. She also says that in modern times, ideas about memory vary significantly from more essentialist conceptualizations which include brain studies, psychology and psychoanalytical traditions to “social constructivist conceptualizations that recognize the memory itself, the value given to remembering or forgetting, the ideas about and practices around memory and the way in which human beings learn to use their memories, to recollect and give meaning to memories is socially situated” (Reading, 2002:4).

Studies of memory functions have been an interest for many generations of philosophers. Roediger and Wertsch say that although a rapid rise of the memory studies were in 18th and 19th centuries (including the British empiricist philosopher David Hume, who discussed how events of the outside world might be represented in mind), the ancient Greeks discussed the process of remembering (Roediger and Wertsch, 2008:13). In general, 18th century with the philosophical turn to scientific objectivity is also called the breach between the memory and history understood as something integrated. The distinction of history as more objective and formal than memory was a result of the wider shift of philosophical viewpoints during the Enlightenment in Europe. “Memory, which was thought to lack reason, became gradually abandoned in favour of history, which was thought to be based on logic, order and the rational ordering and prioritising of the past” but memory as being unable to provide credibility was considered as doubtful, argues Anna Reading (Reading, 2002:32).

However, if studies of traumatised memory are discussed, then it was in early 1980s when the outbreak in academic studies of this branch started its way up. There were two works that enjoyed much popularity at that time – Yerushalmi’s *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory* where he argued that “Jewish historiography can never replace an eroded group memory” and Nora’s *Entre memoire et historie* there he claimed that “we talk about memory so much because there is so little left of it”. At the end of the decade a scientific journal “History and Memory” saw the light and thus a discourse of memory was brought to

the scene. During the 1980s the average age of survivors of the Holocaust and Hiroshima/Nagasaki bombings reached sixties and a serious concern arose that the generation having experienced those events would pass away without leaving recorded memories. (Douglas and Vogler, 2003:6). These events stimulated memory studies' popularity, however, memory itself already requires various interpretations, so it is not a single field that deals with it but there are various sciences which work with exploring it.

While the memory studies can be linked with multiple scientific fields like history, anthropology, sociology, psychology, philosophy and politology, particular interest in developing memory studies as such has risen only in the last decades. However, much effort should be put to distinguish research methods and tools of investigation in memory studies, for example, Roediger and Wertsch describe the memory studies as “a huge tent in which scholars from many perspectives and fields can find a home, using their quite disparate methods and means of inquiry” (Roediger and Wertsch, 2008:12). If the memory studies continue to grow and are defined as a separate field of science then certain tools of research and terminology should be introduced to avoid mixing methods of different sciences together. It is quite possible that there will be more interest in memory studies in the future because there are still stories that are left untold also about the events that most of the people have some comprehension about, and, furthermore, there will be stories which will need hearing ears in the future. The modern phenomenon as blogosphere for me seems also as a willingness to track down the memories of current experienced time which due to the speed of modern technologies and fast changing events are not only quickly created in aftermath of the event but is also quickly forgotten. I believe there will be a plenty of work for memory researchers, not only the memories of which we are running out soon because of no living survivors but also memories of people who want to be heard and who themselves track them down.

1.2. Significance of Memory Studies

Memory and history are two interrelated matters which are not existent in the absence of each other. There is not only an individual memory but also a collective memory of people, framed either by their own historical experience or experiences passed on to descendants in form of memories which are then present in the historical and cultural consciousness of younger generations. This is where the issue about history and memory gets complicated because for some memory is something more individual and can be conveyed to other people only by expressing a person's subjective feelings about the particular events of the past,

whereas history is seen to be more objective and based on documents and hard facts. When it comes to such complex pages in the history as the World War II and extermination of the Jews, then a critical approach combined of memory and history together is needed. This is supported by LaCapra who argues that the aim of historical understanding is to develop not only “a professionally validated public record of past events but also a critically tested, empirically accurate, accessible memory of significant events which becomes a part of the public sphere” (LaCapra, 2001:95).

The memory of events which still has living witnesses is alive in them as well as their children and from such a point it cannot be observed as an indifferent glance into history but, as the author mentions, it adds emotional value and poses questions to the past. The Holocaust is not an exception, even opposite it raises not only questions but also brings accusations.

This means that memory is not frozen in the past, quite contrary - there is a strong connection to the present and future and if we study memory then we have to focus on the fact that the past is not carried into the present unchanged. We reconstruct and recreate it in the present. (Gutman et al., 2010:2). The current memory studies deal with the preventing the possible conflict, because memory can be put to service the revenge and make danger to the future. (Gutman et al., 2010:3). They also suggest that “future is both determined by the past and determining how the past is remembered and represented” so in order to understand the power of memory we should look on the interrelation of the past and the future. (Gutman et al., 2010:8).

LaCapra says that, if we get too preoccupied with memories then it can indicate that we arrive to the lack of a constructive will and most probably will divert the attention from the present situation and the necessity to shape the future. He also considers the phenomenon of the “nostalgic, sentimental turn to partly fictionalized past” which is presented in an ingratiating, conventional narrative form. That could be the case when a not critical approach is used in dealing with past events, probably more in semi-documental prose writings recalling the past. What he means in the context of memory is that memory has tricks and lapses which results in that memory is imperfect, so that would also explain a big deal of controversial issues when starting to recapture memory about distant past from today’s point of view. However, “memory poses questions to history in that it points to problems that are still alive or invested with emotions and value” (LaCapra, 1998:8), as well as memory have effects on shaping, constructing and cultivating collective identities.

A different thought is discussed by Levy who considers the importance of political expedience as a method of construction of the past and there he refers to a popular citation of

George Orwell - “whoever controls the present controls the past” as a central theme in the memory literature. Contrary to this state or nation based observation, there is M. Foucault’s notion of “counter-memory, paying attention to sub-national units of analysis such as ethnic minorities, gender and other subaltern groups with counter-memorial agendas” (Foucault in Levy, 2010:15). So what the author means is that the preoccupation with the past in terms of necessity to remember it has become a part of politics and is perceived as means of conveying values to future generations. Thus, memory as meaning-making activity can become an empowering resource for various groups (Levy, 2010:17). So there could always be some types of memory, which would provide a certain group more privileges in social life but it does not always mean that memory is abused in this way because there are important events in the past which are needed to be remembered and if they had caused serious deprivations for some groups of people that should be considered.

1.3. Definition of Memory

“Memory is something that is central to human existence: it configures and reconfigures people’s identities, it enables us to understand the world we live in, and, it underpins creativity”. (McConkey in Reading, 2002:3). A definition of memory found in Hunt’s writings states that “memory has two main roles: it is a storage and retrieval system, and it is a functional system with affective, psychosocial and cultural uses” (Hunt, 2010:69).

LaCapra distinguishes two types of memory – primary and secondary. The primary memory is that of the person who has been a part of the events and bears them in mind in a certain way. He describes it in this way: “This memory almost invariably involves lapses relating to forms of denial, repression, suppression, and evasion, but it also has an immediacy and power that may be compelling.” Secondary memory is a memory what derives from a critical work on primary memory, either it is done by the same person who has the original experiences, or more often, by an analyst, observer, or secondary witness like a historian. Secondary memory is the one that the historian offers to those who have not themselves been a part of the given event of period. (LaCapra, 1998:20-21). He points out that obviously no memory is purely primary because there are aspects which have transformed it after the actual occurrence of the event, in the sense, that it is affected with processing through mediation of forms, types, archetypes, and stereotypes which have been assimilated or elaborated through the passage of life (LaCapra, 1998:21).

There is an issue of a sort of binary opposition when it comes to the discourse of memory. You cannot talk separately about history and memory, individual and collective memory, so if you focus on one, you have to deal at least with one of the others. For example,

trauma survivor's memory can be considered as a clash between, as S. Friedlander calls it, "common memory" (that tends towards restoration of coherence, closure, redemptive posture) and "deep memory" (inarticulate, without meaning, unrepresentable), where the return of 'deep memory' hampers the emergence of a "coherent self founded on 'common memory' " (Douglass and Vogler, 2003:15).

1.4. Collective Memory

Anna Reading in her book "The Social Inheritance of the Holocaust" says that the concept of the collective memory or socially inherited memory has received rather big attention in the social sciences and humanities. However, the collective memory is embodied in different forms – public memory, national memory, cultural memory, historical memory, and they all "suggest how memories are developed and configured to create social cohesion through broader consensus about the past" (Reading, 2002:5).

Nigel C.Hunt describes the collective memory as "information about society that is accumulated over the years and develops into a kind of 'social fund', and is drawn upon in the development of social discourses and individual narratives, and is important for commemoration and memorialisation", as well as it is "a set of recollections, repetitions and recapitulations that are socially, morally or politically useful for a group or community" (Hunt, 2010:5-6, 98). He specifies that these joint memories held by a community can refer to any period of the past, however, they are the last three generations in which collective memories are living most intense (Hunt, 2010:97). He refers to Halbwachs who distinguishes between personal and historical memory, where the last is more important because it provides a social framework for the functioning of the individual memory as it itself is dependent on society, determining what one will remember and forget. (Halbwachs in Hunt, 2010:99). He also defines the collective memory as a tool for future generations in constructing their personal and social identities and ensuring a social continuity in a community (Hunt, 2010:105).

When you talk about collective memory, it is both something which is profound in some group's awareness, but at the same time it is more indirect and metaphysical than personal memory. The collective memory is not "the sum of isolated personal experience, but something that was an intensely shared communal experience, the sum of a collection of separate but similar individual experiences" according to A. Funkenstein, who also says that the term "collective memory" should be used carefully, because "only individuals are capable of remembering" but at the same time remembering takes place only in social contexts (Funkenstein in Douglass and Vogler, 2003:17).

When LaCapra speaks about trauma and traumatized memory, he argues that “accurate memory of the past may or may not be necessary for an individual “cure”, but such memory, including memory, that confronts the traumatic dimensions of history, is ethically desirable in coming to terms with the past both for the individual and for the collectivity”. It deals with self-understanding and the social sphere, revealing how the collectivity is representing its past linked as well to its present and future. He also states that an accurate memory about the events that are significant to collective past is an important element of the legitimate policy. What is even more important with an accurate, critically tested memory work, is that it helps in active forgetting of the past, “or letting bygones be bygones, which (to the extent it is possible) is both earned through collective effort and desirable in group relations – not simply a matter of political expediency” (LaCapra, 2001:95-96).

1.5. Trauma and Memory

There can be found different explanations of what the trauma is. Douglas and Vogler assume that the “standard dynamic of trauma makes the traumatized subject the passive recipient of the traumatic event, in categories that have moved beyond victim/survivor to include “onlooker trauma” (the effect of witnessing a traumatic event) and secondary PTSD (the post-traumatic stress disorder a therapist may get from treating a traumatized patient) to “trans-generational” trauma (descendants of trauma victims)”. They refer to M. Micale who presumes “that it is not the physical injury per se, or even the emotional shock, but rather the mental experiencing of it, the affective and ideational processing of the event, that constitutes the psychological trauma” (Micale in Douglas and Vogler, 2003:10).

LaCapra points out the importance of trauma in memory and history studies, with its effect not only on the victim but also “everyone who comes in contact with it: perpetrator, collaborator, bystander, resister, those born later (LaCapra, 1998:8-9). He also explains how the imagination is linked to trauma and memory in later stages. He means that during the traumatic events, the imagination can provide “momentary release or an avenue of escape” but after that it can turn into disturbance of flashbacks, hallucination and “other traumatic residues that resist the potentially healing role of memory-work” (technique of psychoanalysis, often with trauma victims (Shobe, Kihlstrom, 2007)).

When he refers to the memory processes in the aftermath of traumatic events, he argues that there are in fact two types of remembering trauma – one, which is based on denial and is “acted out”, and the other which is more desirable one, is a result of “working through” the memory. The first one means that the person is reliving the past at the present moment, which may “be (or be not) an accurate enactment, reconstruction, or representation of what

actually occurred in the past, probably involving distortion, disguise, and other permutations relating to processes of imaginative transformation and narrative shaping as well as, possibly, repression, denial, dissociation, and foreclosure”. He explains that when looking at the question of traumatic memory and its relation to memory both in usual sense and the more critical approach as historical research, the event somehow registers and may actually be relived in present but it may not be subject to conscious and controlled recall. Moreover, in traumatic memory the border between the past and today vanishes, and that could refer to experientially “being back there, anxiously reliving in its immediacy something that was a shattering experience for which one was not prepared – for which one did not have, in Freud’s term, *Angstbereitschaft* (the readiness to feel anxiety)” (LaCapra, 2001:88-89, 141). There may also not be necessary means of symbolizing or expressing in form of language the traumatized experience, at least in a critical, self-reflected manner, the words may be used repeatedly as they were used during the traumatizing event, and serves barely as a re-enactment. A somewhat more critical approach is only possible when the “the past becomes accessible to recall in memory, and when the language functions to provide some measure of conscious control, critical distance and perspective and when one has begun the arduous process of working over and through the trauma in a fashion that may never bring full transcendence of acting out or reliving the past in its shattering intensity but which may enable process of judgement and at least limited liability and ethically responsible agency” (LaCapra, 2001:90). This means that the historians who seek the survivors to give them testimony about the past must be aware of the haunting memories of the victims which are not processed in a distanced way, so it is a very delicate question when the person is ready to engage in recalling events in more critically tested senses.

He goes on describing the effect of the trauma on the descendants, saying: “Notably, for those born later, these events may, through a kind of posttraumatic effect, prompt a generalized hyperbolic or exorbitant style that at times becomes indiscriminate and verges on paradoxically bland sensationalism, which may undermine critical judgement and obscure, or provide too one-sided a resolution of the problem of the actual and desirable relations between excess and normative limits” (LaCapra, 1998:181).

In his later writings he also argues that those who had experienced trauma and those empathizing with them might have a more or less unconscious willingness to remain with the trauma, in a way it is a fidelity to trauma which could be explained by melancholic sentiment and bond with the dead. Furthermore, on a somewhat different level, there is a tendency to transform trauma “into the occasion for sublimity, to transvalue it into a test of the self or the group and an entry into the extraordinary”, argues LaCapra. “In the sublime, the excess of

trauma becomes an uncanny source of elation or ecstasy. Even extremely destructive and disorienting events such as the Holocaust or the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, may become occasions of negative sublimity or displaced sacralisation. They may also give rise to what may be termed founding traumas – traumas that paradoxically become the valorized or intensely cathected basis of identity for an individual or a group rather than events that pose the problematic question to identity.” (LaCapra, 2001:22-23).

Somewhat similar idea is discussed by Douglas and Vogler, saying that “while individual trauma confers individual identity, the function of trauma as a “social glue” holds groups together on the basis of ethnicity, gender, race, sexual orientation, disease of handicap”. Later they also refer to Flanzbaum, who assumes that the glorification of suffering is one of the main ways to legitimize claims to minority or ethnic status and “trauma had been so successful in providing it that individual and group identities are increasingly based on historical instances of victimization” (Douglas and Vogler, 2003:12).

1.6. Bipolarity of Memory and History

Although there is an ongoing use of memory and history as two interchangeable concepts, they are more of an opposition to one another. Memory can be categorised as a way of conveying “authentic knowledge based on direct experience” at individual level, whereas history may be seen as a “collective discursive project, always mediated and inferior to authentic memory”. However, for others history is more credible and scientific as it is not based on subjective, sometimes inconsistent flashes of personal experience. Nevertheless, there is a common belief that only memories, which have been traumatised, can be trusted, in other words “it is history only if it hurts”. Douglas and Vogler also highlight that “the Holocaust is the ultimate traumatic decentering of history and subjectivity, giving it a privileged and paradigmatic place in the twentieth-century memory” (Douglass and Vogler, 2003:15-16).

LaCapra argues that there is memory, which is caught in a binary opposition with history or “simply conflated with it rather than implicated in a more problematic, mutually questioning relation to it.” There are historians who anxiously contrast memory and history, as well as those who bring them nearer each other or even confound them. For the first ones, memory is what “history must define itself against”, in other words memory is the antithesis of history. In the second case, “memory’s importance stems from its putative position as the ground or essence of history, when it is understood as history or at least as history’s matrix or muse” (LaCapra, 1998:16). Later he adds that the memory is not identical with history, but neither is its opposite, but their relation over time may vary. “The problem of their actual and

desirable interaction is oversimplified by a stark opposition between the two. Memory is a crucial source for history and has complicated relations to documentary sources. Even in its falsifications, repressions, displacements, and denials, memory may nonetheless be informative – not in terms of an accurate empirical representation of its object but in terms of that object’s often anxiety-ridden reception and assimilation by both participants in events and those born later.” (LaCapra, 1998:19). He also points out that memory that has a critically informed fashion is important to shape the type of history which is needed today, either to be criticized and avoided or as something to be respected and emulated. And at the same time it is history which serves to question and probe memory in critical manner and find out what in it is empirically accurate and what is different, but still significant. LaCapra says: “Indeed, once history loses contact with memory, it tends to address dead issues that no longer elicit evaluative and emotional interest or investment”. He also highlights that “memory is both more and less than history, and vice-versa.” History is not capable to grasp certain elements of memory – the experiencing, the emotional plane, the qualitative aspect of the experienced phenomenon and on the other hand history includes demographical, ecological, and economical factors which are not covered by memory. “It [history] tests memory and ideally leads to emergence of both a more accurate memory and a clearer appraisal of what is or is not factual in remembrance.” (LaCapra, 1998:20).

When it comes to collective memory and history, not only these two are contradicted but also collective memory is on the opposite end of the individual memory. M. Haulbwachs views memory as a “living deposit” kept outside the academic history record. He reveals that the time when history and memory were the same and were practised through rituals and prayers had come to an end a long time ago, and the border where history starts is drawn from the moment where the tradition and social memory vanish. History cannot provide people with social, collective, communal identity because it consists of mostly written, constructed, sometimes controversial, visions about the past, while collective memory is the vital means of human existence, because there is “a circular relationship between collective identity and collective memory, in which the memories help to constitute the sense of collective identity itself, even while it is the collective identity that makes such mode of memory possible”. (Douglass and Vogler, 2003:18-19).

Often the memory of the survivors or witnesses of some of the worst events in the history of humankind in the 20th century are not directly included in the history as the academics consider the memories too individual and subjective. However, we should be concerned about witnesses, because it is sooner memory on which the writing of history is based, than documents which reveal the surface or helps to construct the carcass of history.

This carcass based of facts probably should be filled with memories, no matter how skewed or subjective they are, because it would be space where to gain a wider understanding of events happening in the past. The same way as journalists are taught to include a touch of humanness in the basic news, maybe historians could do similarly. For a news journalist it is not only to write about the bare facts but also recount how they are affecting ordinary people, merely including some lines with thoughts of some individuals. Historians could increasingly add parts of memories in their books and even clarify that these are subjective visions of the past, but they exist and they make it possible to create a collective identity through personal identification or recognition of similar experience we are told about since our childhood. Maybe there is a way to combine memory and history, so that those who acknowledge not only objective (if such thing is existing) history, could have an insight both in the tradition of academic writing and the living memory at the same time.

Young acknowledges that up to this day survivors' memories have been insignificant in the Holocaust historiography, because of the simple distinction which is used by historians – history is that which happened, memory is that what is remembered of what happened, thus there is no much space left for survivors voice what leaves a historian without this valuable information. (Young, 2003:278). Friedlander draws the attention to the fact that “historians either have dealt with descriptions of the background or with narrations of the *Shoah*, never, to my knowledge, with an *integrated* approach of both”, but it is impossible to have a historical understanding of our time, if the recollections from the victims are not taken into account. But what could be done according to Friedlander is to interrupt the narrative flow by self-aware voice of a historian who offers alternative facts and interpretations, thus becoming an integrated history. It should not mean abandonment of historical standards, on the opposite – deepening them (Friedlander in Young, 2003:278). He “incorporates the living memory of survivors into historical narrative, not to privilege it but to show better how events were apprehended (or misapprehended) as they unfold” (Young, 2003:279).

1.7. Problems in Carrying out Memory Studies

As there is almost no academic field in social sciences and humanities where a link with some type of memory cannot be found, then there exists a variety of topics and methods, which scientists are working with. However, there could be problems faced by all the researchers. The manner, advocated by Habermas, in which working through history would be appropriate, is “a manner that accurately and critically engages a traumatic past, assists understanding while simultaneously counteracting prejudice and victimization, and helps lay the basis for a legitimate, self-scrutinizing, and self-critical democratic polity” (Habermas in

LaCapra, 2001:123). The problem for historians and researchers is how to work with and include equal attention to all the mentioned values when dealing with past, especially the one which had left many people traumatized.

Roedger and Wertsch point out that historians work with written sources, memoirs, eyewitness descriptions, physical artefacts and other sources whose accuracy cannot always be probed. Not only the researchers must “discern patterns and arrive to well-documented claims”, but also face the difficulties which arise when the same event is pictured in the perspectives of different countries, say the Second World War’s depiction in Germany, Russia and the USA. Also when it comes to autobiographical memoirs the veracity can be questioned as the memoirs are usually written in old age and most often without aid of diaries or notes. In the case of a group memory Wertsch speaks about the “schematic narrative templates” which are used to deal with the past, when some templates are continuously used to refer to particular events which have similar pattern, for example, occupations and uprisings. “National narratives are help to organize historical memories of people and are embedded in literature, the customs, the politics and the ways of thinking of peoples all over the earth.” (Roedger and Wertsch, 2008:12-13).

Another issue is highlighted by Douglass and Vogler who point out that examining of memory and history is not only restricted to academic discourse. Politics of them can be changed by the state as well, if we take, for example, the Soviet Union, which altered the shape of the history in the way which suited best for the state and propaganda. An idea “who controls records and memories controls the past” was presented in Orwell’s book *1984*, but furthermore, the modern state has the means of media technologies which are used to create events “before they are recorded in individual memory and unofficial records”, and, in addition, there is a whole “memory industry ranging from the museum trade to legal battles over repressed memory and into academic book market”. So they conclude that memory is not any longer seen as just raw factual data but it is interrelated at different levels, and “always “managed” both at the level of the individual physic economy and the institutionalized circulation of discourse”. (Douglass and Vogel, 2003:16).

When speaking of memory and trauma in this text previously, there was mentioned LaCapra’s definition of what memory is, where he distinguishes the primary and secondary memory. When trying to explain trauma, he suggests that “memory then is always secondary since what occurs is not integrated into experience or directly remembered, and the event must be reconstructed from its effects and traces.” He continues saying that in this sense even the original witness has not fully immediate access to the experience itself when it is traumatic, so the secondary witness like historian has small chances for it (LaCapra, 1998:21).

Another problem when dealing with survivors' experience is the lack of means of narration when it comes to describing the past to a researcher. Telling about that type of experience with the language which is available for us could seem inadequate for the person who had survived the horrors of the Holocaust. Sentences "my family was killed" or "my mother and two sisters and brother were gassed" fail to describe what a person had seen then and thus these meanings are literally incommunicable for those who have not been through it (Biggsby, 2006:12). Biggsby refers to Dembo who makes a distinction between deep and external memory:

"When I talk to you about Auschwitz, it is not from deep memory my words issue. They come from external memory... from intellectual memory, the memory connected with thinking processes. Deep memory preserves sensations, physical imprints. It is the memory of the senses. For it isn't words that are swollen with emotional charge. Otherwise, someone who has been tortured by thirst for weeks on end could never say 'I'm thirsty. How about a cup of tea.' This word has spilt in two. *Thirst* has turned back into word for commonplace use. But if I dream of the thirst I suffered in Birkenau, I once again see the person I was, haggard, halfway crazed, near to collapse, I physically feel the real thirst and it is an atrocious nightmare." (Dembo in Biggsby, 2006:13-14).

Thus, if we presume, that the in case memory *per se* is probably available for the historian, the problem arises with putting it into words not only to the survivor but also for the historian when later communicating it in a form that would not lose its authenticity.

When one concentrates on the traumatic event and victim's memories, then the problem can arise in the affiliation of the historian who can be affected by the traumatic story of the victim so that he becomes polarized and feels sympathy for the victim and holds a position against the perpetrator. However, this position is oversimplified in the most cases because the historians are aware that they have to keep it as objective as they can. According to LaCapra, the stance of historian is thereby controversial as a neutral onlooker, if he has not elaborated a complex position upon the tragic grid of the Holocaust participant-positions, when he does not simply identify with one or another position. He writes that: "the historian should attempt to prepare the way for overcoming the entire complex of relations defined by the grid: perpetrator-collaborator-victim-bystander-resister" He tries to explain in such form: "The purpose of this overcoming would be the generation of a transformed network of relations that counteract victimization and allow for different subject-positions and modes of agency. Working through the past in any desirable fashion would thus be a process (not an accomplished state) and involve not definitive closure or full self-possession but a recurrent

yet variable attempt to relate accurate, critical memory-work to the requirements of desirable action in the present.” (LaCapra, 1998:42).

1.8. Memory and the Holocaust

It has been hard for the Western society to identify itself as a high point of civilization in the aftermath of Second World War. LaCapra calls it a shock to an enlightened self-consciousness (LaCapra, 2001:176). The problem of the Western society after the Holocaust is the way how to remember it, because it is not possible to discuss the 20th century without discussing also the extermination of the Jews.

The way how people remember the aspects of the Nazi Holocaust has become a subject of a scholarly investigation, at least starting from 1970s. As J. Young specifies, it is not only important to remember what happened but also how it is integrated with cultural forms and structures. (Reading, 2002:11). As the “Final Solution” meant the total extermination of the Jews, it meant also erasure of their history and culture in the form of Jewish synagogue, cemetery, library, theatre destruction and erasure of language, because the only valuable language in the concentration camps was German, and Yiddish was virtually eradicated together with its speakers. The Nazi also employed mocking of Jewish culture for example, using their gravestones for walls and roads, or another example was the Cracow ghetto wall which was build to resemble Jewish gravestones. In the death, work or concentration camps people were prohibited of connections to the outside world and anything that would remind them of their previous lives, like photographs or other personal belongings. “ The Holocaust was something what survivor Primo Levi called a war against memory” (Reading, 2002:12). Bigsby agrees on that the Jews were not permitted to have history, their religion existed only to be mocked, seemingly because of its self-evident failure to protect them (Bigsby, 2006:6).

Even when the Nazis saw that they are not going to win the war, the war on memory was accelerated so that they not only annihilated the Jews but also the record and traces of the industrial killing mechanism, so that the places where inhumanity took place were often destroyed, and the number of the killed was explained with medical disorders. Primo Levi depicted this phenomena of no memory allowed with a case when the “Jewish men who were forced to cremate the bodies of the victims of mass gassings, were themselves killed every two weeks so that they could not tell others what was happening (Levi in Reading, 2002:12-13). According to the Nazi stand, the Holocaust would be a “never-to-be-written page in history”, as Himmler had stated it. (Young in Reading, 2002:13).

However, in the aftermath of the mass killing, many survivors were exposed to personal denial and identity change. There were also more formal ways of denying the Holocaust, like state policies in many Eastern European states until 1980s, which although did not deny the existence of the mass murder, did not either chose to accent the centrality of Jewish genocide. During 1980s and 1990s the denial movement expanded more than before and now as well new antisemitic forms of reference towards extermination of the Jews are represented by various actors. Although, as already mentioned before, the urgency to retrieve the memories of those still alive in the recent decades has accelerated and it is mediated in various forms, like museums, autobiographies, novels and films. (Reading, 2002:13).

Similarly speaking about trauma's impact on identity, La Capra argues that trauma brings about a breach in memory, especially for a victim, thus "placing the identity in question to the point of shattering it", but moreover, it can cause difficulties of identity for others. He says that the traumatic events are most often present in victims in a latent form for the first period of time, also survivors after the Holocaust in Israel were forced to adopt a new identities and forget the old ones and keep silent about the way it was destroyed (LaCapra, 1998: 9). Wave of a new heroism upsurged in Israel parallel to the efforts to build a new state. Cebulski tells that the first generation of Israeli nation did not recognize the histories and memories of the survivors, and they were viewed as "sheep to slaughter" or "human dust", making their recollections as a collective taboo. Some of the rejection could be attributed to the helplessness during the Holocaust because the information echoed in Palestine as well, but afterwards the society wanted to overcome the past by focusing on building a heroic and strong nation which would allow anyone to humiliate it. However, newcomers had social and psychological hardships to communicate their traumatic experience to others due to the lack of common language, because of there was no common language in Israel at that time, but meanwhile they were supposed to learn to love their new society and integrate in the new values of the state despite the deprivation of professional help and loneliness (Cebulski, 2007).

LaCapra also engages in discussion about such reaction as empathy in reply to acknowledging the stories of those survived in a traumatic event, in this case the Holocaust. He says that empathy is an important component in understanding, including historical understanding, however, it is hard to control it and it has complex relations to objectification and dialogic exchange. Some forms or research or professional identification tend to marginalize or put limits to its role, because "empathy is bound up with a transference relation to the past, and it is arguably an affective aspect of understanding which both limits objectification and exposes the self to involvement or implication in the past, its actors, and

victims.” However, LaCapra later explains that a desirable empathy should not include full identification with the victim, but as he puts it – it could rather be an “empathic unsettlement in the face of traumatic limit events, their perpetrators, and their victims”, what of course does not guard from secondary or muted trauma as well as “objectionable self-dramatization in someone responding to the experience of victims”. He means that it is possible to speak about this type of distant trauma for those who treat the traumatized victim or even in case of in-depth interviews but it is exaggerated that everyone who had come into contact with materials which include memories of traumatized survivors would undergo some form of secondary trauma, for example, those who have viewed videos with testimonies and images from concentration camps. (LaCapra, 2001:102).

In the case of thinking about perpetrators, one may feel antipathy and hatred but as LaCapra argues, one should “recognize and imaginatively apprehend that certain forms of behaviour (those of Einsatzgruppen or of camp guards, for example) may be possible for oneself in certain circumstances, however, much the events in question beggar imagination”. Although it does not mean, if one is able to imagine that under certain circumstances one would be able to perform such actions, that the one is prone or willing to or even capable to do it, however, no one can tell how one would act in certain situations until he experiences this situation. (LaCapra, 2001:104).

At the same time there is a concern that we get too preoccupied by memories and testimonies from the Holocaust survivors that they sometimes almost constitute history itself. La Capra himself is concerned about the obsession or fixation on memory, saying that the surfeit of memory has led to addiction of bitter-sweet melancholy that gives the traumatic experience of victimization a sacral or auratic value. (La Capra, 1998:13-14).

2. HOLOCAUST IN NAZI OCCUPIED EUROPE

2.1. Jewish Persecutions by Nazi Regime during 1933-1945

The Holocaust was systematic, bureaucratic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of around six million Jews by the Nazi regime and its collaborators. “Holocaust” from Greek originally means “sacrifice by fire”. The extermination of the Jews was based on the theory that acknowledged the Germans were racially superior and the Jews as well as the Gypsies and the Slavic people were deemed inferior and therefore not necessary for the Third Reich. (Holocaust Encyclopedia, 2011). The term Holocaust is used in the context of the Jew extermination in the Nazi Europe, however, in the human history there had already been episodes of mass liquidations of a certain group of people based on their ethnicity, nationality, race or religion. Genocide requires central planning and machinery to implement it. The Ottoman Empire carried out a genocide against the Armenian people living in its territory during the World War I, killing more than 1,5 million people. (Armenian National Institute, 2011).

The Holocaust, as Irwing Greenberg states, can be dated from 1933 when the Nazi came into power. From 1933 to 1939 the Jews were expelled from the civil service, the army, the schools, and the professions. The Jews were prohibited from serving non-Jewish, so that the “Aryan” doctor should help only “Aryans” and vice versa. In fact, the Jews became isolated from the rest of the society, furthermore, they were excluded from the citizenship, so that they were deprived of all civil rights. There was a growing violence, both legal and physical, which was exercised in waves of an attack on the Jews, an expansion of attack and a pause when the Nazis waited for the response from the world and evaluated if they could continue in the same way or needed to adjust the plans. (Greenberg in Rittner and Myers, 1999:4).

However, the actions taken then were not only anti-Semitic but also were aimed at the groups of people who were deemed as sub-humans or not desired in the Nazi Germany, like the Gypsies, the Slavic people, mentally and physically disabled, homosexuals, Communists, Socialists and Jehovah’s Witnesses. For example, the Euthanasia program for mental defectives was started two years before the beginning of extermination of the Jews and it was also continued throughout the war. (Holocaust Encyclopedia, 2011). Yet the practice of killing with gas was adopted later while carrying out The Final Solution. (Greenberg in Rittner and Myers, 1999:4). Hitler’s ultimate goal was demographic reconstruction of Europe, based on race, the creation of a New European Racial Order, where a racially pure German *Volk* would dominate. (Lumans, 2006:144).

Although during the first years of Hitler's rule many Jews emigrated, the rest of them stayed with the thought that the "true Germany" will outlast Hitler and tried to adjust to the situation being confident that Germany was their home and their country and the violent regime would come to an end soon. This hope perished in the *Kristallnacht* - "the wave of violent anti-Jewish pogroms which took place on November 9 and 10, 1938, throughout Germany, annexed Austria, and in the areas of the Sudetenland in Czechoslovakia" (Holocaust Encyclopedia, 2011) and afterwards a large scale Jewish emigration took place in Germany, however, the position of other states not accepting more refugees, cut the exit for more Jews who would have wanted to leave Germany after 1938. (Greenberg in Rittner and Myers, 1999:5).

Rubinstein in his turn, argues that until 1939, when the emigration became impossible, around 72 percent of the German Jews had emigrated, thereby at the outbreak of war in September 1939 they were 185 000 but in 1942 when the emigration of the Reich was absolutely forbidden and the transportation to the death camps began, the number of the Jews left was 139 000. Different numbers are given by Stranga, who argues that in 1933 there were 502 800 Jews in Germany, 180 000 in Austria when it was annexed and 200 000 Jews in Czechoslovakia. Thus, in total it was 882 800 Jews, from whom 370 000 escaped in the period of 1933-1939. (Stranga, 2002:204). What Rubinstein means about the pre-war restrictions is that they applied to all refugee migration, not particularly Jewish, however, the numbers of Jewish emigration from Germany present evidence that the escape of the Jews took place in a large scale before the gates were closed forever and many countries allowed exceptions in immigration quotas for the Jews as they saw them being persecuted. Unfortunately, there was tragic fate for those German Jews who had emigrated to countries which later were taken under the Nazi regime, like the Netherlands and Belgium. (Rubinstein, 1997:16-18) The reason why more Jews could not flee the occupied areas was not because of too strict immigration policies in the West but the prohibition to emigrate from the Nazi controlled territories starting from 1939 or later depending on the country. The problem with the question about what Western countries could have done to save more Jews is that most recent writings view the Jews as refugees (which they indeed were during 1933-1939), although they were prisoners at the outburst of war and they were trapped in the ghettos and camps. (Rubinstein, 1997:80).

But those Jews of the Soviet Union and its occupied areas of eastern Poland, the Baltic States and Moldavia were trapped behind the union's walls and were beyond of reach by any means in the world. The 1939 year census in the Soviet Union showed 3 020 000 Jews residing there but later that year and in 1940 as a direct result from the Nazi-Soviet Pact,

annexing the whole eastern Poland, the Baltics and Bessarabia, including the big Jewish centers as Vilnius, Bialystok, Brest-Litovsk and Lodz, more than 1, 910 000 Jews were added. Due to the Pact, criticism of Germany and reporting of its anti-semitic actions was not allowed and most Jews of the newly incorporated areas in 1939-40 were literally unaware of the possible consequences of the German invasion, thus they were unable to flee ahead the Nazi army to the unoccupied Soviet Union areas. (Rubinstein, 1997:78). In fact, they could not have even imagined that they will end up under the Nazi rule. However, even if any Jews desired to emigrate to the capitalist West or the Zionist *Yishuv*, it was clearly like signing a death-sentence to their own lives during the Stalin regime. (Rubinstein, 1997:18).

However, with the outburst of the war the plans for mass murder turned into reality. A special task force – “*Einsatzgruppen*” was created to carry out the killing orders, it was a shooting group of three or four thousand men, split in smaller units (called A, B, C, D). Although, for example, during the first years of occupation of Poland, mass murders did not take place, nevertheless, there still were killings and ghetoization of the Jews. During the war “*Einsatzgruppen*” travelled right behind the German army, trapping and killing the Jews, who lived in the occupied territories. (Greenberg in Rittner and Myers, 1999:8).

Later it was concluded that shooting of the Jews was not efficient because use of bullets were expensive, it was slow, and there were psychological effects on killers and local community, as the killers despite their ideology and hardening, found it somewhat disturbing to shoot women and children, as well as well integrated German Jews who shared something from their own culture. Therefore a cheaper, more effective and less personal method of exterminating the Jews was introduced in the form of travelling trucks where the exhaust fumes of carbon monoxide were piped back in the trucks, and followed by the construction of gas chambers where more potent gases were used to speed up the killing. The Germans also started transportation of three million European Jews towards their deaths towards the East, where six death camps were brought into operation: Auschwitz, Treblinka, Sobibor, Chelmno and Maidanek. (Greenberg in Rittner and Myers, 1999:10).’

Ironically, the Germans killed more Jews in the years when they were loosing in war, respectively, 1943-1944. While the Allies failed to address the Jewish killings separately to be held responsible for, Germans took it as a signal that this issue was not among the most important for the outside world. (Greenberg in Rittner and Myers, 1999:14).

The actual information about extermination and torturing of the Jews done by the Nazis was not publicly known until the end of the war and the Nurnberg trials. In fact, the early reports of the atrocities towards the Jews were not fully understood or even believed by

many, because except the slaughter of the Armenians during the World War I there were no such precedents of determined genocide against one nation.

2.2. Discussion of Allies' Contribution in Jewish Rescuing

The basic question when dealing with the rescue of European Jews and actions from the Allies remains one – could more Jews be saved? There is an ongoing accusation of the Allies for virtually being accomplices of the Nazi crime against humanity merely because they failed to stop the German actions and provide circumstances for more Jews to escape. There are both accusing opinions starting from 1960s of blaming the Allies for not taking serious measures to stop the mass killing of the Jews and criticism towards these arguments.

The great change in the perception of the Allies and their leaders (especially Roosevelt and Churchill as supreme liberators) occurred between late 1960s and mid-1980s when it was considered that democracies did not do anything to stop Hitler's "Final Solution". The alleged Allied failures ranged from closing the doors to the Jewish refugee emigration prior and during the Holocaust, forestalling the creation of Jewish state in Palestine when it was needed the most, to failing to bomb Auschwitz or other camps or creating a special governmental organization to save the Jewish lives, thus being ignorant to Hitler's war against the Jews. (Rubinstein, 1997:2). Greenberg states here that the Allies' failure to confront the uniqueness of Jewish destiny allowed six million Jews to be killed in Europe. He says: "When the Jews of America begged the Allies to bomb Auschwitz, they were told that it was a war to "make the world safe for democracy", and one could not ask for a guarantee of a particular fate for the Jews." (Greenberg in Rittner and Myers, 1999:14). What is interesting is that Greenberg uses the famous quote by Woodrow Wilson when he justified America's need to enter World War I and has no quotation to the source of his statement.

However, Rubinstein argues that there was no possibility to rescue more Jews even if the measures above would be implemented, like bombing Auschwitz or railways to that. He claims that Germany at that time was military predominant in Europe and its population was over 80 million, so Allies could not prevent it of carrying out the genocide. They could only do this by winning the war and thus stopping the perishing Nazi death industry. (Rubinstein, 1997:xv)

When dealing with the argument that Auschwitz should have been bombed by the Allies, Rubinstein deems that it would not have had a serious result. He doubts that prisoners there would have hoped for airstrike prior the end of 1944 when two prisoners escaped the camp and informed wider public about the atrocities carried out there. One of them, Dr Vrba provided information that while being imprisoned he had talked with many deportees from all

over Europe and no one had any or any credible information of the existence of gas chambers in Auschwitz. Neither could the West know about the death camps before 1944, although they were informed about killings of the Eastern Europe Jews in the years before, when neither the United Kingdom nor the Soviet Union were strong enough to do much about it when they were themselves threatened by the Nazi occupation. Dr Vrba says that in the period prior there were proposals made in the West to bomb the Auschwitz (proposals which he induced with his escape in 1944) not all of inmates would have wanted the bombing – because railroads could be repaired in a matter of hours and the Germans did know how to destroy masses of people even before the gas chambers were used. The basic argument against the air attack was the narrow time period in between the early proposals of camp bombing in June 1944 and the last deportations of the Hungarian Jews in July 1944, literally a couple of weeks, and the surprising lack of support in democracies (and in the Jewish community in Palestine). There were Jewish organizations which were afraid that large numbers of the Jews would be exterminated in the bombings, they preferred an underground detachment to be sent there. (Rubinstein, 1997:xix). Basically, they thought that such actions would kill more Jews than save their lives.

The only organization, which was ever established by the Allied government with the specific aim to save the Jews from the Nazis, was The United States Refugee Board, which existed from January 1944 until 14 September 1945. It claimed that it had saved approximately 200 000 Jews in Hungary and Rumania, while Rubinstein doubts it and estimates the number to be 20 000 Jews. (Rubinstein, 1997:182,184) Rubinstein also doubts the idea that it was possible to pay ransom or bribe the German authorities to get more Jews released.

The comprehension of what could and what could not have been done to save more Jews can be made clear by considering *what actually was proposed at the time* in the West and what was proposed many decades later by the historians who were able to reflect on the Holocaust with all the information available, which of course was not the case in the time of war. A historical actor cannot be criticized by later observers for failing to do something what no one thought of the time. (Rubinstein, 1997:206).

2.3. Rescue of Jews in Europe

The overall attitude towards the Jews during the Holocaust varied from indifferent to hostile, people often watched their neighbours taken to death but not many could or wanted to do something about that. Some of them collaborated with the Nazis and many benefited from the properties expropriated from the Jews. There was a small minority of people with strong

courage to stand against inhumanity and give a hand to the persecuted ones. (Yad Vashem, 2011).

Land-Weber says that still very little has been told about the approximately two million European Jews who survived the war, many mainly because of the aid given by ordinary people who often died for their efforts. She highlights that the number of rescuers could have composed one-tenth of one percent of the population of the Nazi occupied countries, although the real number cannot be known. (Land-Weber, 2000:1).

According to Irving Greenberg, the difference of the Jewish survival in different parts of Europe is huge, from 95 percent surviving in Denmark to 90 percent dead in Poland and Lithuania, and around 75% in Latvia. That was not dependent on the Jewish behaviour, neither on passive or armed resistance. Nor was the Nazi behaviour determinant because it was murderous everywhere. The crucial point was the actions of the bystanders – the more were those who resisted, the greater were the chances for more Jews to be rescued. (Greenberg in Rittner and Myers, 1999:3). However, one should observe many differences between the political administration systems in different countries at that time and the case of Denmark is unique in the context of rescuing the Jews, as such collective actions were not possible in most of the German occupied lands where they installed their own government.

Bruland argues that although that was a Nazi idea and command to exterminate the Jews in all the countries under their control, the extensive actions against the Jews would not be possible without the local helpers and local initiatives as well. (Bruland in Dahl et al., 2010:251). There is an assumption that in the countries where there was a higher pre-war anti-semitism and a stricter Nazi grip, the victimization of the Jews was larger, because the social and political disunity of those countries allowed the Germans to use their inner tension against the Jews. The other way around was with the countries where less control was exercised or where there was a greater national unity and less pre-war anti-semitism. (Greenberg in Rittner and Myers, 1999:9).

Elie Wiesel wonders what made some people, who were as vulnerable, afraid and helpless as other fellow citizens, to choose humanity and risk their lives for the sake of rescuing a Jewish person. He asks why there were so few who dared to show consideration with saving at least one victim, whether it was so dangerous to oppose the evil and impossible to help that there were few individuals who irrespective of their religion or education level, often acting on impulse, became Jewish protectors. (Wiesel in Rittner and Myers, 1999:ix)

Some researchers have tried to find out if there were some similar characteristics shared by the rescuers. Some claimed that the saviours are a diverse group of people having common sense of humanity and courage they displayed by standing up for their moral

principles, they are also called altruistic personalities. Nehama Tec who also studied many cases of rescuers concluded that many of them shared characteristics and conditions of separateness, individuality or marginality. The independence enabled them to act against the machinery of death. (Yad Vashem, 2011).

There were different degrees to what ordinary people helped the persecuted – some people gave food, for example, leaving food where they would pass on their way to work, others suggested somebody who would help with shelter, some themselves hid the Jews for one or a couple of nights but later asked them to leave, but only some took the burden to save the lives of other human beings for months and years. (Yad Vashem, 2011).

Rescuers were from various strata of population – teachers, students, shopkeepers, factory workers, housewives and farmers. Their age ranged from late teens to eighties. “By protecting the Jews they were forced into a life of deception in their daily relations with friends, neighbours and family. For years they lived in constant fear of betrayal or accidental exposure, knowing full well that the most severe punishment would be the consequences of helping the Jewish people, if they were caught.” They were ordinary people who responded to extraordinary circumstances in a morally exemplary fashion, writes Land-Weber (Land-Weber,2000:2).’

Many Jews were the ones who asked for help from non-Jews, fighting for their own survival. The bystander most often had to make an instant decision when seeing a Jew on his or her doorstep, deciding between mercy towards the persecuted and self-preservation instincts. Rather often it was a gradual process, with the rescuers becoming more involved in rescuing the persecuted Jews. Agreeing to provide a shelter for a day or two would become into hiding for months or years, fighting long and hard to provide the necessary for survival of haunted ones and to avoid being uncovered by persecutors. (Yad Vashem, 2011).

The punishment for saving a Jew ranged from the country, for example, in Eastern Europe Nazis not only executed the person who had given the shelter to the Jews but also entire his family. There was an ongoing propaganda campaign against the Jews as well as to withhold people from helping them. Less severe punishments were experienced in Western Europe although some rescuers also faced serious consequences like incarceration in camps and killing. The constant victimization of every single Jew made people worry about their own faiths if they were to help a Jew to survive. The rescuers lived in constant fear of becoming betrayed by neighbours or being discovered by police squads. (Yad Vashem, 2011).

Those who were among the ones who could not watch the brutalization and killing of the Jews, often their neighbours and friends, and took courage to help them, in Hebrew are called *Hasidei Umot HaOlam*, the “Righteous Among the Nations of the World”. The people

who get awarded with this title are defined as “the high-minded Gentiles who risked their lives to save the Jews” during the Holocaust, however, there are criteria which must be fulfilled to be called “Righteous Among the Nations of the World”, which are: extending help in saving the life of a Jewish man, woman or child during Nazi persecution; endangering ones own life; absence of reward, monetary or otherwise; and similar considerations, “which make the rescuer’s deeds stand out above and beyond what can be called ordinary help, which is of course also praiseworthy”. (Rittner and Myers, 1999:xiv).

Interestingly that in 1984 when the first edition of Rittner’s and Myers’s book was released, it was stated there that about 5000 people have received this title but at the end of the 2010 there were recognized 23 788 Righteous among Nations from 45 countries as can be found in official data of Yad Vashem – Martyrs’ and Heroes’ Remembrance Authority in Jerusalem. (Yad Vashem, 2011). That could be explained with the falling of the iron curtain and the end of repressions towards the Holocaust survivors in the post-Soviet block countries and thus, more stories of the saved Jews came into light.

2.4. The Ways How Jews Were Helped

Many of those Jewish people who survived the persecutions or escaped the occupied territory were helped in several ways, involving multiple rescuers. There is a description of the ways how people helped and protected the Jews summarized by *Yad Vashem* in their section about rescuers (2011):

Hiding Jews in the Rescuer’s Home or Property

There were Jews who found a shelter in rural areas as well as in the cities. The difference was where they were hidden according to the circumstances and possibilities of the rescuer and his family. In the countryside of Eastern Europe they were hidden in bunkers which were dug under houses, cowsheds, barns to prevent them from being seen. In addition to the continuous threat of death, physical conditions in those cold, dark, airless and crowded cellars were hard to bear in long periods. The rescuers also did not have it easy, as they were living in danger of being discovered, as well as they had to provide food, which was a complicated task for poor families during the wartime, remove excrements and take care of other needs. The Jews were also hidden in the attics, in forests, or any other place which would provide concealment, like a cemetery or sewers. Sometimes the Jews were presented as non-Jews, as relatives or adopted children. In the cities, the Jews could find a shelter in apartments which would be adjusted in a way to provide a hideout in case the police would appear for inspection. Children were placed in convents with nuns who did not reveal their

true identity. In Western Europe the Jews most often found hideouts in houses, farms and convents as well.

Providing False Papers and False Identities

To stay alive the Jews needed to obtain legitimation of a new identity, a non-Jewish identity. Therefore they needed the assistance in obtaining false papers and assistance in establishing an existence under the assumed identity. Rescuers were forgers or officials who falsified documents, clergy who faked baptism certificates, and some foreign diplomats who issued visas or passports contrary to their country's instructions and policies. Diplomats in Budapest issued protective papers and hung their countries flags over whole buildings to put the Jews under their country's diplomatic immunity. Some German rescuers as Oscar Schindler used misleading pretexts to protect their workers from being deported claiming them to be necessary in the production for the army.

Smuggling and Assisting Jews to Escape

There were rescuers who helped the Jews to get out from a danger zone in order to escape to less dangerous location. Smuggling the Jews out of ghettos, prisons, helping them cross borders into unoccupied countries or into areas where persecution was not so severe, for example, neutral Switzerland, the Italian controlled parts where no deportations took place or Hungary before the German invasion in 1944.

The Rescue of Children

Jewish parents often were in hopeless situations when they had to make a decision to leave their children to other people, thus probably increasing their chances of surviving. In some cases when parents were killed, children were taken in by families or convents. There were both individuals who decided to take in a child and underground organizations in some countries like Poland, Belgium, Holland and France, which found new homes for children, provided the necessary funds, food and medication, and made sure that the children were well cared for.

3. RESCUE OF JEWS IN NORWAY DURING WORLD WAR II

3.1. Jews in Norway and Attitudes towards them before World War II

In 20th century the Jewish community in Norway was small and it did not have long historical roots. Until 1851 the Jews were not allowed to enter the country on the basis of the Constitution of Norway. When this prohibition was abolished in 1851 by the *Stortinget* (Norwegian Parliament), several Jews began to arrive from Denmark and Germany. Towards the end of 19th century, the Jews belonging to Ashkenazi culture and speaking Yiddish, started flowing from the tsarist Russia, especially from the territories of Lithuania, Belarus, Poland, the Ukraine, escaping the pogroms, especially during the rule of Alexander III. Although there already were some Jews in Norway before 1851, the number was insignificant. The Census showed that in 1865 there were 25 Jews, in 1875 there were 34 and in 1890 the Jewish population increased to 214, but in the turn of the century the census registered 642 Jewish people. Later, in 1920 it showed a number of 1457 Jews living in Norway, but including those who were passing through Norway and did not live permanently, and those who had the Jewish origin but were not very religious, the total number could be 1600-1700. Most of them lived in the capital Kristiania (later called Oslo) but Trondheim became a place where the second largest Jewish community settled down. It did not seem to be a problem for the Jews to acquire citizenship and to engage in some businesses, and they also established Jewish religious organization “Det Mosaiske Trossamfunn” (The Mosaic Religious Community) in Kristiania in 1892. However, the attitudes from the Norwegians were ambivalent, from one side there was an accommodating attitude, as the authorities were willing to foster the trade, but on the other hand, the Norwegians did not have practical experience with the Jews before and their position was more negative and sceptical. (Kjeldstadli, 2003:278-284, 409). It is understandable that a rather remote society which had no experience dealing with the Jews before and only knew rumours about their typical characteristics was quite distanced from them also after their arrival. The number of the Jews was also small and their history in Norway started only in 19th century, thus not being able to establish close interaction with the Norwegian society before the tragic events of World War II.

Anti-semitic tendencies became also visible in Norway when the Nazi came to power in Germany and that concerned the Jewish religious community in Norway a lot. There were newspapers which covered the anti-Jewish propaganda in Germany, and on the one hand, this lead to more anti-semitic mood among the Norwegians. On the other hand, there were discussions about providing help to victims of the Nazi regime and if Norway should open the borders for refugees from the Central Europe. The Jewish community tried to carry out some

informative and educational work in newspapers to decrease the anti-semitic attitude in society and they tried to widen the readers' circle of their own Jewish newspaper so that the society would get more explanatory information, as well as they worked on the questions how to help the refugees. However, the only Jewish newspaper was "Hatikwoh" and it mostly was read by the Jews themselves and only rarely cited in press. (Mendelsohn, 1969:613, 636).

There were student organizations in 1938 in Oslo and Trondheim which signed resolutions against the racial hate and required the Government to receive as many asylum seekers as possible, however, they received some disagreement from other students, who studied in Germany, which meant that the resolution harmed their status as well as the relationship between both lands. On the other hand, there were also Norwegian students in Germany who were upset about the situation and demonstrated willingness to help. (Mendelsohn, 1969:622).

Nevertheless, there appeared more articles in the newspapers, which discussed not only the German Jews but started writing also about the Norwegian Jews. Race biologist Dr. Jon Alfred Mjøen, who was known for his previous writings, added fuel to the flames by publishing a book "The Norwegian Program for the Racial Hygiene" (*Det norske program for rasehygiene*) in 1932, which was later republished in 1938. He publicly argued that the Jews endangered the Western culture and therefore the world had risen up against them. The Jews, for him, were destructive and they did not belong to the productive forces like industry workers or farmers. Words like "Aryan" were visible in newspapers and discussions about the pureness of the race after the adoption of Nurnberg laws in 1935 in Germany appeared in the media agenda, however, there were also strictly condemnatory articles from other scientists and writers who criticized the opinion about the race pureness and anti-semitism. In 1930s more nationalist and anti-semitic newspapers appeared with persisting propaganda against the Jews, which also accused the State Church for sympathizing with persecuted Jews. There were accusations against the Jews for their binds with Bolshevism and they were said to have a dominating role in forming Marxism, and that they were doing it not against the capitalism but against the Nordic civilization. (Mendelsohn, 1969:624-626, 630).

Starting with 1934 the program of Nasjonal Samling (NS), which was the Norwegian National Socialist Party, declared that the nation is an organic unity, which should be both protected by race-hygienic policy and stricter immigration rules. Nasjonal Samling was strongly influenced by fascist and nationalist ideology. At the beginning there were only some hundred members with its leader Vidkun Quisling. In 1930s their overall element of racial rhetoric became more powerful, not only against the Jews but also such groups as the Gypsies, Negroes, Chinese, Poles and Greeks, who were evaluated to be inferior. They also

supported the reduction and isolation of the inferior elements and sterilization of people with genetic defects. In addition, they did not support racial mix between the Norwegians and sami people who lived in the far north of Norway, as the Nordic race was superior in Europe. In 1934 a law that gave rights to the state to sterilize people who could not take care about their children, or who had inborn defects but later in 1942 and 1943 there were additional laws adopted which were based on eugenics and included more use of force in carrying out these measures and including a larger group of people. In the last elections before occupation, in 1936, Nasjonal Samling received only 1,8% support. However, after 1940 the number of members increased rather rapidly and it later was the core for the Nazi installed government. (Tjelmeland, 2003:35-36, Store Norske Leksikon, 2009).

Many manipulations with the number of the Jewish inhabitants were seen in media, for example, the number varied from 7500 to 75 000 (however, the census in 1930 showed only 1359 Jews) but in 1938 after the Anschluss of Austria, the German newspapers wrote that there were close to 100 000 Jews in Norway and the country is completely “verjudet” (ruled by the Jews). Also Norwegian papers were unquiet about the numbers of refugees floating the country, though between 1933 and 1940 only around 500 Jews from other countries got permission to reside in Norway, and many only for a short period, and a lot of them used Norway mostly as a transit country. Actually, the authorities conducted quite careful immigration policy maybe also because of the public sentiments which were brought out in the media. (Mendelsohn, 1969:641).

Practically, there were not only assaults in the written press towards the Jews but also in reality. For example, already in 1933 a synagogue in Bergstien was a subject to vandalism, and in 1934 posters were put out in Asker to agitate villa owners against hiring out villas to people with Semitic origins. Starting from 1937 there were more visible actions against the Jews, for example, some companies made advertisements in newspapers that they would not employ any Jewish workers and the leaflets with propaganda against the Jews were spread in the city. Posters with caricatures about the Jews were put on the windows of the Jewish firms in Oslo immediately after the November action Kristallnacht in Germany in 1938. (Mendelsohn, 1969:637-638).

However, such actions were mostly single ones, based on extensive intolerance of the Jewish presence by some individuals and groups. Bruland writes that such actions sometimes could lead to quite an opposite reaction from the society than expected, for example, in spring and summer of 1941 when the windows of the Jewish companies were painted with anti-semitic slogans, it did not lead to more dislike towards the Jews but rather a reluctance towards Nasjonal Samling. The general opinion was that these actions were repulsive. NS

forbade such single actions with a party directive in July, 1941. (Bruland in Dahl et al., 2010:256).

Nevertheless, radicalization among the Nasjonal Samling which wanted faster development in actions against the Jews was a sign of growing intolerance. This tendency grew stronger with the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941 as the fight against bolshevism and the international Jewry intensified. (Bruland in Dahl et al., 2010:257).

3.2. Norwegian help for European Jews

3.2.1. Jewish Religious Organizations Help to Other Jews

In 1930s the Jewish help-unions in Oslo started to take care of the German Jew refugees, for example, in 1933 The Mosaic Religious Community asked the Jewish Aid association to set up a committee to help the German refugees. Although there were not many who actually were able to come, many enquiries from the German Jews about work and residence permits in Norway were received. The religious community was facing economic problems and could not perform all its plans successfully. However, in 1938 the Vienna children committee in Norway received economic support from the Mosaic Religious Community and a guarantee for religious education in the Jewish school. Together with other Jewish organizations the Mosaic Religious Community also gave help to the Czech refugees. There was a plan to accommodate 10-20 Jewish children from Finland in 1940 but then situation in Finland stabilized and Norway in its turn itself became occupied by the Nazis. Actually, the religious organization remembered the ones endangered in the Baltic States and Poland, for example, they covered the expenses, which the Women Union had while collecting clothes for sending them to Vilnius but the war stopped this initiative, and clothes were distributed among the poor ones from the Jewish community in Oslo. Contributing to the monthly newspaper's "Hatikwoh" appeal to help the East Europeans, the Norwegian Jews sent fish-oil to these lands during 1930s. (Mendelsohn, 1969:595-596).

In fact, already since 1906 there was an organization which helped the Norwegian Jews in need. It was called *Jødiske Understøttelsesforening* (Jewish Support Organization) (changed its name to *Jødisk Hjelpeforening* (Jewish Help Organization) in 1939) and it was engaged in social work. However, before the outbreak of the war, it started to arrange help for the Jewish refugees from other European lands who basically used Norway for transmigration. For example, in 1938 there were 150 refugees registered in this organization but more than a hundred had a possibility to travel further. In 1938 and 1939 in total the organization helped around 300 people from which 200 got permission to travel to other

countries after a short stay in Norway. Most of them had German, Austrian, Czechoslovakian or Polish origin. (Mendelsohn, 1969:650).

The general attitude from the authorities was not to allow work migration because of the difficult situation with unemployment in 1920s and 1930s. People coming should either have their own means of living or a guaranteed job in Norway in order to be granted a residence permit. In practice – political refugees often were allowed to come to Norway but the Jews had more problems to enter, and they did not have a positive support group inside the country. The Jewish community could not help much as it was small and pre-cautious but the authorities often expressed anti-semitic and discriminating remarks. The Norwegian immigration authorities, noticing that there will be more refugees from the German occupied countries, looked for more instruments for immigration rejection, and introduced visa regime with Austria and Czechoslovakia in 1938. (Kjeldstadli, 2003:463-469).

A small number of people were lucky to flee to Norway thanks to private initiatives from the local Jews, though the circumstances were difficult. There were few chances to obtain a work permit and mostly they were issued for a limited time. The main part of people who were granted such work permits were skilled professionals who taught Norwegian workers their speciality, and basically settled in Oslo and Trondheim, where the biggest Jewish communities lived. (Mendelsohn, 1969:650).

Jewish communities also had the initiative to bring some groups of children to the country, first in 1934 for one month summer holidays for children from Berlin but later in 1938 there was created a committee in Oslo for arranging summer stay for children coming from Vienna. One similar committee functioned also in Trondheim. Committee in Oslo together with *Nansenhjelp* and Norwegian Consulate General in Vienna granted exit permits for 20 poor children below 10 years. The children came to Oslo on June 15, 1938 and together with 12 children from Oslo went to summer camp in Baerum owned by the Jewish Youth Association. At first the plan was that the children would stay only until September but the committee later was encouraged to ensure their stay longer. 16 from the Vienna children (4 went back) stayed in children's home in Oslo which was owned by the Jewish Orphanage but steered by organization *Wienerbarnas Venner* (Friends for Children from Vienna). When the war started that year, some of them left Norway but the rest were brought to Sweden later in 1942. (Mendelsohn, 1969:651).

The quota for the children's home was 60 children which at first would live there but later would be placed in families for upbringing up to three years. They usually were put into the Jewish families but when there was lack of them also in Christian families all over the

country. Some of the children went back to their parents when Norway became occupied. (Mendelsohn, 1969:651-652).

3.2.2. Non-Jewish Organizations Contributing in Helping Jews

Before mentioning private organizations who engaged in helping Jews, it is worth mentioning the Swedish consulate in Oslo that on the side of Sweden made active attempts to rescue the Jews by helping many to receive the Swedish citizenship and obtain a visa. The Nazis were very irritated by these and other efforts to save even people who were already deported or were imprisoned in Norway. Finally, after a year long negotiations – five days before the war ended – they succeeded to bring around 50 prisoners from Berg and Grini camps to Sweden. (Mendelsohn, 1988:47).

Aside from Jewish assistance and help organizations there were also non-Jewish organizations which were gradually established in Norway with the aim to help the Jewish refugees. Such organizations were, for example, (Workers Fund of Justice), Asylrettens Venner (The Organisation for the Promotion of the Rights to Political Asylum), Komiteen for Landflyktige Åndsarbeidere (Committee for Intellectual Workers in Exile) and Nansenhjelp (Nansen's Help Organization). (Mendelsohn, 1969:648)

The first organization Arbeidernes Justisfond began its work in 1934. However, among those to whom it helped to get a residence permit were only few Jews and most of them were political refugees. The majority of them were supported to get over the border to Sweden in 1940. (Mendelsohn, 1969:648)

Organization with which the Jewish Help Organization had the biggest cooperation was Nansenhjelp (The Nansen Aid), whose leader was the son of the well-known arctic explorer Fridtjof Nansen, architect Odd Nansen. This organization was established in 1936 to help those many thousand people who after the World War I had become stateless and were not under any state protection. (Store Norske Leksikon, n.d.). The organization worked to help people irrespective of their nationality, religion or race. It consisted of many warm-hearted people who worked to help refugees, at first focusing on Austria. After the Nazi Anschluss of Austria, the work was concentrated in Czechoslovakia and they made the effort to obtain temporary residence permits for the refugees in Norway who later would go to the USA. Understanding the danger for the Jews after the annexation of Austria, Nansenhjelp specially focused on helping them. Nansenhjelp managed to get residence permits in Norway for 200 adults and 60 children from both countries already after the Hitler's troops had marched in Czechoslovakia, 1939. (Ulstein, 2006:15, Store Norske Leksikon, n.d.). Many of them later moved to other countries, especially Canada. Even a short time after the Germans

occupied Prague, Nansenshjelp continued to work there and send refugees over border to Poland and later to Norway. For example, in 1939 they struggled hard to bring 37 children aged 6-13 to Norway who were then placed in families in Southern Norway. Unfortunately, when the Nazi occupied Norway, many parents wrote letters or were pressed to write them, to ask their children to be brought back. Nansenhjelpen had to make impossible decision, knowing that for them there would be more chances to survive as the neutral Sweden was so close, however, they could not write letters with explanations as letters were a subject of censorship. 18-19 children returned home but only two of them survived. Others were killed together with their parents. (Ulstein, 2006:23-24).

When it became impossible, they continued the work in Poland with support of Norwegian minister, Niels Christian Ditleff, who during the war time from the Swedish side endeavoured to save prisoners from Nazi concentration camps. To find ways of means Nansenhjelp organized different kinds of money collections, and charity campaigns, later it was supported by the state and municipalities, and also there were big donations from individuals and institutions, including the Nobel Committee. During the Nazi occupation, Odd Nansen was imprisoned in the Nazi concentration camps, first in Grini, later in Sachsenhausen but survived. (Mendelsohn, 1969:648-649).

3.3. Nazi Occupation of Norway and Actions towards Norwegian Jews

Norway was occupied by the Nazi Germany on April 9, 1940. The Nordic countries for Hitler were “Germanic” on their core so they were supposed to be more privileged kernel areas in the “Greater German Reich”, something like provinces under the German rule. It does not mean that Norway was not brought under a violent regime but it was not a subject of destructive colonizing as the Eastern European countries for German *Lebensraum*. (Dahl et al., 2010:11). Norwegian legal government went into exile in United Kingdom and a collaborationist government based on the nationalist party “Nasjonal Samling” was established and the Nazi marionette prime minister was Vidkun Quisling, whose surname now is used as a synonym for a state traitor.

When the Nazi seized Norway, there were around 2100 Jews in the country that made around 0,8 % of all the inhabitants. Actually, among all the countries which the Nazi Germany occupied during the first three years of the war, Norway was the one with the smallest Jewish population. (Bruland in Dahl et al., 2010:251). In Kjeldstadli (2003:278-284), the number of residing Jews in 1940, together with refugees from the Nazi regime, could have been 1800 in total. More detailed numbers are given by Tjelmeland (2003:29) who says that

in 1942, when the first deportations started, there were 2173 Jews living in Norway, from whom 530 were not Norwegian citizens. Most of them were concentrated in Oslo and Trondheim but in total there were 60 Norwegian counties with Jewish families. He claims that 1300-1400 managed to escape to Sweden but almost every family lost some of its members, and 230 families were totally exterminated. Bruland on his hand says that the registration of the Norwegian Jews in 1942 showed 1536 Jewish people residing in Norway and that it was not a homogenous group, as they had different origins and places of residence. (Bruland, 2010:253). However, the difference in the numbers given can be explained with the fact that the Jewish people hesitated to register as they suspected the ill ending of it.

Although the registrations and deportations began 2 years after the occupation, already in 1940 the Jews faced infringements of their rights, when at first their radio transmitters were confiscated. Just before the attack on the Soviet Union, 140 male Jews from North Norway, Trondelag and Oslo were arrested and mistreated in the concentration camps in Norway. The most of the population did not know anything as newspapers did not inform about this, except, that the fight against the Jewish community has been started. Only few Jews tried to escape, as they did not suspect that the Norwegian prisons would be only a stop before transport to death camps in Poland. The attitude towards the Jews in concentration camps, for example, in Falstad and Grini, during the time from 1940 to autumn 1942, respectively, as long as the Jews were kept there, was humiliating, abusing and people were forced to meaningless and inhuman work. (Ulstein, 2006:42, 51). From November, 1941 to February, 1942 virtually all Jewish businesses were seized in 3 Norwegian counties and also in other parts of Norway propaganda and actions from Nasjonal Samling against Jews were growing. The Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union led also to the radicalization in the intentions to exterminate all Norwegian Jews. (Bruland, 2010:256).

The turning point was 1942 when the “Final Solution” was also implemented in Norway, starting with stamping all Jewish passports with “J” and later requiring them to fill out questionnaires about their families, possessions and religious habits. In the beginning of October, 1942 systematic arrests took place in Trondheim that preluded further deportations and economic liquidation of the Jewish community. The Nazis liked to have quick operations in order to achieve the maximum result and to avoid questions. In comparison to other countries, the process towards deportations was very compact in Norway – from start of the Jewish registration to the last serious deportation it took less than a year. The deportations were so quick that other measures and restrictions towards the Jewish population were not even necessary. (Bruland, 2010:253).

However, Quisling's government not only took part of the Nazi led systematic deportation process but also carried out its own measures. It compelled all people who were one half or one quarter Jewish to register themselves which meant that many people falling within this classification left their homes and searched for a shelter in Sweden. (Bruland, 2010:260). However, in the order to the police, published in Ulstein (2006:116), it is stated that those with at least 3 Jewish grandparents, as well as "Jewish bastards" with 2 Jewish grandparents, if he/she belongs to the Jewish religious community or he/she is married to a Jew. The Norwegian approach was stricter than that what Nuremberg rules defined in Germany because people with two or one Jewish origin grandparents (called Mischlinge (Mix) of first and second degree) qualified for Reich citizenship, with the reservation that it could be rescinded. (The Holocaust Encyclopedia, 2001:423). There in fact were relatively many Jews from the first generation in Norway (who came after 1851 from Denmark and Germany) who married with Christians and it was still common in the beginning of 20th century. However, this was only spread among Danish and German origin Jews, those who came from East Europe were very conservative towards mixed marriage as they came from orthodox Judaism tradition where it was not common to marry with gentiles. (Kjeldstadli, 2003:408). Furthermore, Quisling's regime ordered that everyone belonging to Jewish religious community counted as a Jew and therefore needed to register.

Also on October 26 Quisling signed a law on the confiscation of the Jewish assets and wealth. The aim was to look after that the Jewish wealth would go to the Norwegian state and not Germany. (Ulstein, 2006:121)

3.4. The Arrests and Deportations of Norwegian Jews

The first action against the Jews started on October 26, 1942 at 6 o'clock in the morning to arrest all the male Jews in the whole country. The night before some people standing close to the police warned the resistance group members who then tried to warn and hide as many Jews as they could. Most of the Jewish people lived in Oslo area and this was the place where the one night struggle with time between the rescuers and the police would take place. (Ulstein, 2006:121)

The whole day prisoner transports drove to Bredtveit prison in Oslo, and in the evening 248 Jews were gathered there. Later came 50 more from other parts of the country. They were all taken to Berg prison camp close to Tonsberg. Again, the Nazis did some deceptive calming down of the rest of the Jewish society some weeks later when they released men who were older than 65. Those who were gone into hiding heard the rumours that the

Nazi Germans had changed their minds and many went back to their homes and their wives and children. (Ulstein, 2006:130).

A month after the first action, on November 25 another order to arrest all the Jewish women and children the next morning was issued. Eventually, all Jewish men who were still free, as well as everyone who was in hospital should be taken as well. Police inspectors had given directions to take all of them to quay in Oslo and put them on a ship. The exception were the women who were married to a person who did not have J in his passport or those Jewish who were British, the USA, Central and South America or neutral countries citizens. Prisoners were supposed to take baggage with them including food for four days, work clothes, a blanket, tableware etc. (Ulstein, 2006:142-143).

Many Jews were taken into hiding that night by their friends in resistance but, unfortunately, they did not reach everybody, because many lived in distant places and did not have phones at home. So the rescuers had to go themselves to the addresses they knew and to warn and take them away. Some Jews still did not want to believe what will happen and refused to leave their homes. Some were sick and could not move but some rescuers took them with force out of their homes and hospitals. On the one side, there was the armed Norwegian police, criminal police, SS-force, on the other — dispersed, unarmed resistance movement people who again had only some hours during the night to save as many as possible. In the morning of November 25 police came to many empty houses. However, that day 523 men, women and children were transported to Oslo. The youngest victim was 4 months old, the oldest – 81. At the quay the ship called “Donau” was waiting to take them to death camps in the Nazi Germany.

Women and children were captured some hours earlier but many men had been prisoners for at least one month. There were sick people lying on stretchers, mentally ill people taken from the institutions, old people gathered from the retirement homes. At the end of the day, “Donau” left with 532 Jewish people onboard. The same day another ship with Norwegian prisoners left, including 26 Jews but a week earlier the same ship took Norwegians and 19 Jews to Germany. (Ulstein, 2006:142-150).

In the evening of November 26, prisoners from Trondheim arrived by train. As the ship had already left, they were put in Bredtveit women prison. Later prisoners from Bergen, Aalesund, Stavanger and Kristiansand arrived and they all were placed in the same prison. From December 1942 till February 1943 the number of Jewish prisoners rose from 72 to 158. The prison was not quite ready to receive such a group of children, teenagers and adults, so many practical things needed to be organized by prisoners themselves. Already the next day, because the children found hard to realize and adapt to the new situation, a school for them

was organized by Leo Eitinger. It functioned until February 24, 1943 when everyone was taken onboard a ship and transported to Szczecin. (Ottosen, 1994:90-91).

In general the actions against the Norwegian Jews could be described as following. There were three parts in the arrest-deportation operations during autumn 1942. The first was to arrest and put the victims in concentration camps in Norway, then to provide a sea transport out of the country and at last they should be moved to death camps in Poland. (It was not among the aims of occupants to kill all the Jews on the spot as the killing of around 700 people on Norwegian soil, most of them citizens, would cause strengthening of the resistance movement and create problems with non-Nazis in public administration. The Nazi regime made quite an effort to hide what was going on.) These tasks were fulfilled in three and a half months during autumn 1942 and spring 1943 and they were done by the Norwegian police in close cooperation with the Nazi security police. In 2 larger and several smaller boats together 772 Jews were deported from Norway but only 34 of them survived. In addition, 21 people were killed or committed suicide as a result of measures taken in Norway. (Bruland, 2010:258-259). Other numbers are given by Tjelmeland, who claims that 767 Jews were deported from whom 30 survived and other ten were killed in Norway during actions against the Jews. (Tjelmeland, 2003:28-29). Mendelsohn in addition claims that approximately 760 were deported and 25 from them survived, in addition 7 English citizens who were also deported from Norway. A number of 23 Jews were killed during wartime in Norway, but around 100 people spent all the years of war in Norway, 60 of them in prison camps. According to Mendelsohn, the total number of the Norwegian War victims reached 758. (Mendelsohn, 1988:51)

So in total from 1536 Jewish people registered in 1942 around 50% were killed. From those 772 deported 54% were men, 34% were women and 11% children below 18. (Bruland, 2010:264). The first census after the World War II in 1946 showed that only 559 were members of the Jewish community were present in Norway. (Mendelsohn, 1988:40). For them who had escaped to Sweden or other countries, there were few reasons to return to Norway because their families most likely were killed. Those Jewish people who came back often faced economic difficulties even some years after the end of the war, also because their companies were mostly destroyed or turned into apartments during the wartime. Together with economic difficulties, psychological distress was something Jewish people also experienced in the aftermath of war. (Bruland, 2010:264-265).

3.5. Rescue of Jews in Norway

3.5.1. The North Sea Traffic

However, shortly after the Nazi invasion in Norway, a resistance movement began its underground actions in whole Norway, starting from autumn 1940. The refugee traffic was started towards the Western harbours soon after the Southern Norway surrendered. The boats with refugees went to Shetland and Orkney, islands located close to Northern Scotland. Already in May, 1940 34 boats arrived in Lerwick, Shetland, carrying more than 200 refugees onboard. (Henderson, 2005) Ulstein, mentions a group of 12 German Jews who in 1940 ran from the occupied Bergen to a safer place towards the North, and they were lucky enough to get on a ship first to Tromso, and later to England. He estimates that in total only 20 Jews fled to the United Kingdom over the Northern Sea during the wartime. (Ulstein, 2006:26-27, Ulstein, 1985:2). Those Norwegians who fled had good skills in seamanship and knowledge of the Norwegian coast which meant a lot in organizing resistance administrated from London. "The Shetland Bus" is the name of the secret operations in the North Sea, using volunteer Norwegian crewmen based in Scotland, and running a secret route in and out of the Nazi occupied Norway between 1941 and 1945. (Henderson, 2005). The number of Norwegians who escaped to England until summer 1941 was around 3300. However, 18 different boats sank and 158 people lost their lives, and including those who were arrested and died after that, the total number of victims was 321. Approximately the same number had fled to Sweden over the border. Most of them were not wanted by Gestapo and they thought that from Sweden would be a way how to get to the England to join the Norwegian forces. Sweden proved to be a blind way though but for them who ran from Gestapo, Sweden was escape. (Ulstein, 2006:80, 1992:1).

At the same time, Quisling and Gestapo attacked the resistance movement groups in different parts of Norway, and arrested their members. Many were sent to the death camps, and to concentration camps and prisons in Norway where they were severely tortured. The Nazis wanted to get names from others cooperating in the North Sea traffic and saboteurs. (Ulstein, 2006:49). In 1942 those who were organizing the illegal traffic to England were also subjects for repressions from the Germans, and the traffic was practically stopped because of the big-scale arrests. Almost from every country the Norwegians wanted to get over to Sweden so in 1941-1942 there was a refugee traffic started by the underground organizations (like Milorg, Sivorg, Komorg, XU) themselves. (Ulstein, 2006:49).

3.5.2. The main escape route – traffic to Sweden

The First Route to Sweden

As Ulstein describes, the first organized route for the Jews came into being in the autumn 1941 in order to bring them over to Sweden, which was a neutral country during the World War II. “The man behind the route was Willhelm Rothkopf, an Austrian Jew, who had come to Norway as a refugee before the war. He had through other Jews got in contact with Eger Ollum, a young man from Oslo. The sister of Ollum was married to a Jew who was a flight mechanic and lived at Kjeller, north east of Oslo. His name was Benjamin Bild. In March 1941 Bild was arrested. He later perished in Germany. Ollum organised a route for small groups of foreign Jews whom Rothkopf traced in the Oslo region. Ollum used to guide them on the train from Oslo north east to Flisa, where friends would guide through the forest to the Swedish border.” Usually there were small groups but once Ollum and his friend took around nine people on the train to Flisa. They separated in 2 groups, one in the front of the train, the other in the end. Ollum had false passport for himself but the refugees did not have any documents. This time there was a control in the train, which came from both ends, and the refugees were pressed to the center of the train, anxiously waiting minute by minute if they will reach Flisa or the control will reach them first. Flisa came first. They jumped out on the wrong side of the train and hundred metres away there was a van which waited for them and drove them further. (Ulstein, 2006:76). “In January 1942 Rothkopf and Ollum had got away those foreign Jews Rothkopf had traced. Shortly afterwards, in February he disappeared. It was told that Rothkopf had been arrested. A few days later a police contact warned that Ollum was in danger. He escaped on his own route to Sweden.” (Ulstein, 1985:2).

The first who were out to flee, were the foreign and stateless Jews as they were exposed to higher risk, but the others who were among the earliest refugees were Jews from Trondelag. There in a period of half a year Gestapo had closed all Jewish companies and they understood that there would be no easy life for them. (Ulstein, 2006:77). However, often the refugees had obstacles to come into Sweden because the Swedish border guards and immigration authorities rejected incoming refugees. For example, from April 1 to December 7, 1941 they rejected 800 Norwegians that was around 27% of those who tried to enter Sweden during that period. When it came to the Jewish refugees it seemed that the Swedes had the same opinion as the Norwegians had before the war – that a person could not simply be acknowledged as a refugee just because he or she was Jewish. (Ulstein, 2006:78). This massive rejection happened because the Jewish refugees were basically not counted as political refugees and some border guards were especially strict in interpreting the existent regulations.

“Sweden’s Traffic”

Later the serious measures against the Jews lead to massive escape. Rescuers were put under a complicated task – a multishaped group of society should be brought over the border to Sweden, men, women, little children, elderly, sick people. The number of the Jews who escaped to Sweden during the war was 925, according to Mendelsohn. From October 26, 1942 until mid January 1943 around 700 Jews successfully reached Sweden. Around 150 had already fled before actions started in 1942. (Mendelsohn, 1988:47, 51). As the majority of the Jews lived in Oslo area, the traffic to Sweden went through the East part of the border. The most intense traffic was after the actions towards the Jews and resistance people. In autumn 1942, each week around 50-60 people left the country thanks to the illegal routes to Sweden. The main idea was to get away those people who were already pursued by Gestapo, and from whom they could press out the names of other resistance members. In that autumn there were both the Jews and people from the resistance groups who needed a quick way-out because an illegal military organization was pulled apart in Southern Norway and many refugees flew to Oslo. Also the North Sea traffic was halted. In the crisis periods the capacity of 50-60 people per week was too small but most often only 3-4 people could go on escape route at the same time in order not to attract attention. If they were taken by truck, 20-40 people could have place in it. One of the biggest transporters with trucks was “Carl Fredriksens Transport” – a cover name for an organization which was one of the most effective in illegal transportation and managed to take the biggest number of refugees to Sweden even though it existed only one and half months. The transport went five times per week in the last months of 1942 but later it was discovered by Gestapo and the main organizer, Alf Pettersen, fled to Sweden himself but several others ended up in the prison camp Grini. (Ulstein, 2006:183-184, 220, 223).

It took many people in planning and implementing each rescue stage to make it successful and cope with unexpected obstacles. There were also brave women who managed to rescue children from the Jewish orphanage and with the help of others children were brought to Sweden where an orphanage was established in Alingsaas. In one German rapport about the Jewish escape it was said that “in this Jew-smuggling were participating police officers, other officials and intelligence”, however, there were not mentioned many others like railroad workers, drivers, border-guards and those who hid Jews at their houses. (Mendelsohn,1988:47). Although police was generally perceived as the Nazi collaborators and the Jewish persecutors as well, there were some examples when police officers warned about the coming arrests or even contributed in helping those who tried to escape, or looked

through fingers when individual Jews fled. (Tjelmeland, 2003:30). However, helping to a Jew was a huge risk which could cost a life to a policeman. There were policemen who disguised their resistance work behind working in Gestapo, maybe with delaying the implementation of orders or even sabotaging them. On the other hand, Gestapo concealed its terror behind the Norwegian police who were sent to carry out arrests, and maybe many Jews would have been more suspicious and had fled if they had understood that the Norwegian police was the hand of Gestapo reaching for all living Jews in Norway. (Ulstein, 2006:29)

Refugees and their transporters always had to be really cautious because of the Gestapo men who were infiltrating in the resistance groups, for example, in organizing the routes for the Jews to Sweden. Such a man, for example, was a Gestapo agent Henry Rinnan, who set up a route from a small town called Molde (West of Norway) to Sweden in 1942 to win the trust between the Norwegian legation in Sweden. After some refugees had successfully reached Sweden, Gestapo arrested the next ones who used Rinnan's "help". (Ulstein, 2006:46).

Trogstad Guides and a Double Tragedy

A very tragic final was to refugee traffic to Sweden, organized by a group of refugee guides operating in routes Oslo-Trogstad-Sweden and Oslo-Halden-Sweden, which started to function in autumn 1941. The initiative in Oslo was taken by Sylvia Salvesen, who had contacts in resistance movement and with another woman Anne Olsen who had friends in Trogstad – four brothers Lovestad. Two of the brothers, Hakon and Karsten were refugee guides in those two routes, but Lovestad's farmyard was a refugee gathering place before the run. In September 1942, Salvesen was arrested for the second time and later sent to Ravensbruck death camp. This arrest did not finish the refugee traffic because besides Anne Olsen, there was another group led by Sverre Lie who also had contacts in the resistance circle where brothers Lovestad were involved. However, in October the refugee sending from Oslo seemed to be too dense, making the receiving families feel insecure and constrained, so they asked not to send more at that moment. However, the group who were already on the spot consisted from 6 people, including Oskar Mendelsohn and his wife Sussi from Trondheim, had some trouble already with the arrival because the password they had got in Oslo had expired and Hakon anxiously grabbed a pistol and interrogated them thoroughly. When he checked that they were not dangerous, they were put in a lorry and taken Eastwards towards the border. The driver was Peder Pedersen, one of the most used guides in Trogstad and next to him Hakon Lovestad. The area was full of soldiers and close to the border they

were stopped by a paramilitary organization's "Hird" soldier at a check point to inspect the car but Pedersen angrily shouted at him and luckily he gave them the way and they reached the border. (Ulstein, 2006:80-82).

Karsten Lovestad was arrested two times earlier in 1942 but he managed to escape over the border to Sweden, and later he operated as a courier between Gothenburg and Oslo and sometimes he took the duty to be a guide for refugees. On October 17 he came to Oslo and got a task together with Harry Pedersen to take a big group of the Jews over to Sweden. Ragnar Ulstein (1985:4-5) gives a detailed description about this unfortunate and tragic case:

"Four days before the great action against the male Jews a group of nine Jewish escapees were on the train from Oslo to the border town of Halden on the southern tip of the country, where a narrow fjord divides Sweden from Norway, only a few miles from the Swedish border. This was a route for refugees organised by an insurance man in Oslo, Sverre Lie. Half a year before he had opened the route as a small compensation for the loss of the sea routes from western Norway to allied ports. This traffic had stopped because of great losses due to informers and enemy actions.

The refugees were guided by a fireman, Karsten Løvestad, and his assistant, Harry M. Pedersen. Karsten, a former volunteer in the Finnish/Russian war, was from the village of Trøgstad south of Oslo. At the railway station in Halden his brother Haakon was waiting to guide the group to the border. Unexpectedly, a pass control was carried out on the train by an ill-famed state policeman. When coming to the Jews, he got suspicious. The control seemed to end fatally. To prevent this, Karsten Løvestad drew his pistol and shot the policeman. Løvestad with the two refugees, Herman Feldmann and Willy Schermann, jumped off the train.

A full scale alarm was beaten in the district. Hundreds of soldiers and police-men with dogs were sent into the area. They soon found the two Jewish refugees. The group remaining on the train was arrested near Halden. Two days later German police searched Karsten's home in Trøgstad and arrested his father and an older brother, Odd.

The day before, a Jewish couple, Rakel and Jacob Feldmann, both 51, came to the Løvestad family from Oslo, asking them to be helped to the border 40 kilometres away. They had read in the newspaper that their son Hermann had been arrested accused of murdering a border policeman. The Feldmanns had left Oslo in great hurry and were on the edge of panic when arriving at Løvestad. So was the Løvestad family who had heard of the shooting incident. Haakon had returned from Halden, but kept in the woods fearing he was also searched for. The Feldmanns were brought to a friend of his, also a guide on the route, Peder

Pedersen. It was decided that they should stay there until a chance of bringing them to the border arose.

After the war, the guides claimed before a court that the Feldmanns were physically unfit to walk the long way through the forest. They also were much out of balance. Transport by car was difficult to arrange because of all the controls. They considered it as dangerous to return them to Oslo, where the action against the male Jews now had been launched. If arrested, they would be forced to give up their escape contacts and might destroy the escape organization.

Finally the guides brought Rakel and Jacob Feldmann to a pond and killed them. Before sinking the corpses into the pond, they took their money and a gold watch. This happened on October 27th. On the same day the brother of Haakon, Karsten Løvestad was caught by the Nazis. He was executed a year later. Haakon escaped to Sweden, while Peder Pedersen continued as a guide for refugees, among these also the Jews. He was arrested in 1943 and deported to Germany, but survived.”

The Most Demanding Run to Sweden

Ragnar Ulstein depicts one of the hardest and longest runs to Sweden to save a young woman and her child. The story unfolds here:

“A few days before Christmas this year of 1942 four Norwegian skiers reached the Swedish border bringing Irene Klein and her small daughter Anne Rutt. This time Anne Rutt was placed in a sheep–skinsack specially made for her. The main guides were Jon Moan and a neighbour friend Ludvig Kruksve. They had brought mother and child 150 kilometres eastward and had been helped on their way by several friends. Two young men joined them across the mountains on the last phase of the journey. They returned when the border was reached. Irene had grown up in Germany and had no skiing experience but the terrain at some points had a steep rise, up to 600-900 meters high. The men from Leksvik had given her some basic instructions and practice, but it appeared that she needed help when they reached the steep and tall mountains. From there on she was towed with a rope round her waist across the mountains to the border – and safety, but not from the highland winter. They still were far away from populated area. Irene was on the point of exhaustion and a few hours later she was unable to walk any more. Jon went on with Anne Rutt, hoping to find help. Ludvig stayed behind with Irene, taking care that she did not fall asleep in the snow.

Jon found a ski track that brought him to a fence wire. On the other side he saw dimly a few houses. It was deep in the night and everybody seemed to be asleep. He managed to

cross the fence wire and approached one of the houses. Suddenly he was halted by a soldier who pointed his gun against him.

“Am I in Norway or in Sweden?” Jon asked, his heart beating.

“You are of course in Sweden”. The soldier opened the door into the barrack as it appeared to be. There everybody awoke. The soldiers rubbed the sleep out of their eyes, got out of their hammocks and grouped around the young Norwegian. He carefully lifted the sack off his back and placed it on the floor, then took the child up in his arms. At that moment, tears trickled down the cheeks of the soldiers.

A few hours later Swedish soldiers with Jon in front found Irene Klein and her guide. Irene was brought on a ski sledge to the camp. After that the guides from Norway were allowed to return. They arrived safely in Leksvik when the church bells chimed for Christmas Evening.

When Irene and her daughter Anne Rutt finally came to Stockholm, great news awaited: Irene’s husband who had been in a prison camp near Oslo, had miraculously managed to flee from the camp and had been brought to the Swedish border. He met his family a few days later.” (Ulstein, 1985:8-9).

3.5.3. The Belief in the Positive Scenario Until the Last Moment

In springtime 1942 a man called Helmut James von Moltke came from Germany and searched for anti-nazis in Norway because he had a message to give to the Norwegian Jews. The message which he conveyed to the resistance movement members was that in a conference in Wannsee close to Berlin on January 21, 1942 the Nazi officials agreed on implementing the Final Solution or the ultimate full extermination of all Jews in Germany and German occupied territories in death camps in Poland and Germany. It was Moltkes contribution to the Norwegian Jews, although he did not know when the Final Solution would come, at least it was clear what all the Jews were going to face in future. However, many hesitated to leave even after hearing the news.

Oskar Mendelsohn, a Norwegian Jew and historian who escaped, explains this hesitation with the optimistic mood in society, at least in the beginning, hoping that the Nazi occupation will not last long, some months, maybe half a year, before something decisive happened, like the landing of the Allied forces. Individual arrests and bringing to a prison camp did not seem so horrifying to all. The British actually tried to make Hitler to believe that they would invade Norway, thus making him concentrate forces there, however, it also made the Norwegians believe the same. (Ulstein, 2006:55-56).

Case of Violinist Ernst Glaser

The action to catch all male Jews in October, 1942 caused danger also to the well-known violinist Ernst Glaser. On Sunday evening, October 25, the pianist Robert Riefling and his wife paid a visit to Glaser's family and insisted that they should leave the house immediately. Riefling was one of them who knew something about what would happen. Glaser was in the middle of the concert season and it did not feel like a good time for sudden changes but he and his family did what their friends asked them to do and left the house. The next day, when the action had been going on for several hours, he called his neighbours living in the same house and got told that police had been there earlier. Glaser however did not quite grasp the seriousness of the events and wanted to go to the rehearsal in Philharmonic where he was a soloist in a concert later that evening which would be transmitted on the radio as well. A well-informed German man Dr. Wolfgang Geldmacher who had contacts with people from the German resistance, among them lieutenant colonel Stelzer in chief command of Wermacht, also contacted Riefling and thought that Glaser was in great danger.

Glaser himself did not want to run from his performance that evening and meant that his absence would cause wide attention. He went to the rehearsal and later when it was over, he decided to go to Minister Gulbrand Lunde who had once offered him a ride to Sweden in police officer's car. In the office he got to know that Lunde had died and he rushed out anxiously. However, though his friends begged him later that evening not to perform the concert, he decided to do what he had taken in mind.

When he was to enter the Philharmonic, a police constable stopped him at the door. But he did not need Glaser. There was a phone call received about a bomb in the concert venue, so the policeman needed to check all the bags. During all the evening Glaser was very distressed, he could not concentrate on playing his part on time, his mind was busy with the warnings about the close danger. After the concert, he hurried out and rushed to the car which was waiting for him to drive him to hiding place at his friends. (Ulstein, 2006:123-125)

Later on he got in contact with Lise Børsum who finally sent him on the train to Romedal north east of Oslo. His wife and children were sent on another route. From here the refugees were driven by car to a small schoolhouse and the school-teacher's apartment on the first floor. The hostess was Kjellaug Herset. (Ulstein, 1985:9).

Case of Publicist Max Tau

Many Jews were in doubt even when the alarm bells started to ring. One of them was a literature-historian and publicist Max Tau. His friend had been worried about his safety for quite a long time. He was a German Jew who came to Norway in 1938 and now he did not

want to run from the country unless he was forced to. The literate himself said that he did not feel any of the anxiety that his friends did, quite opposite, he became more optimistic. He believed in the positive.

Among his Jewish friends, there was an aged couple – Felix and Teodossi Silber. One day he wanted to go to surprise them with some flowers and to cheer them up so that they would not be so afraid. He went to their place and rang the signal at the door which they had agreed on before. He was in very high spirits and could not wait to surprise them. Nobody opened the door. Suddenly the janitor came up and said: ‘You do not need to ring here anymore. It’s all over.’ The married couple died in December in Auschwitz.

For Tau and others it was an unknown future which was never so close as it was then. It was already October 26 but Tau was rather courageous. One afternoon his friends noticed him at a restaurant and were alarmed by the fact that he was still getting freely around the city. They asked him to disappear immediately and he the same evening did it. The publisher Grundt Taunum took him into the hiding for one month and later took him to the border where he was guided over to the Swedish side.

Tau experienced all the stages for the emotions shared by refugees. First, “this is not happening to me”, then sudden awakening and at the end almost panic fear to be caught. And later the relief standing on the Swedish ground and being accepted there. (Ulstein, 2006:126-127).

3.5.4. The First Action and Help from the Resistance Movement

Shortly before the first actions against all male Jews, a German officer at the staff of General Falkenhorst, lieutenant colonel Theodor Steltzer informed his friend Wolfgang Geldmacher, who was a German civilian married to a Norwegian about the coming arrests. They drove from one friend to another who was involved in the resistance movement and had Jewish friends or contacts, and tried to spread the word. They thought he was too nervous and did not quite believe him but at least one friend of his, Lise Børsum, took a Jewish professor and his wife in a hideout. On October 25th when Mrs Børsum was queuing up in front of a food shop, Geldmacher suddenly appeared and said: „Get out of the queue! Tonight it’s happening!”

On the same day Geldmacher managed to arrange a meeting in Borsums villa for around 40 people who were gathered to help the hundreds of the Jews who were in danger that night and did not have any idea about that. Many of them who came already had the Jews at their homes but the task was to find more accommodations for them.

The meeting itself was simply a breach of elementary security rules. One of the men was doctor Ole Jacob Malm who was a central person in the Home front leadership. He never should have shown himself up in such a large crowd. Would anyone from the meeting had been taken by the police it could have ruined the core of the resistance movement. But this was an emergency situation. Robert Riefeling had called him to ask if he could take any Jews into hiding and he came to the meeting. He even had a Jewish patient with him, who was taken directly from the hospital.

Before they left the meeting they agreed on how many Jews they would try to provide a cover that evening. Doctor Malm managed to find home for almost everyone in his quota except a couple of Czech doctors – Marianne and Wilhelm Jaroschy. Finally, he called his father Erling Malm who promised to take them into the hiding.

However, shortly afterwards Ole Jacob Malm got to know that one of the people from Milorg (Military resistance organization) who knew him was arrested. He immediately went to cover. Later Gestapo came to his home in search for him. They came directly from his father, who had been arrested. They were leaded to the father by two refugees caught at the border. They were the Marianne and Wilhelm Jaroschy. The doctor tried to take his own life by emptying a bottle of morphine. The border police brought him in a hurry to the nearest hospital where a doctor saved his life, but only for a short time. He perished together with his wife in the Nazi Germany.

Before his deportation he was pressed to tell the name of his latest host, and Erling Malm was arrested. Another step – and Gestapo would have been in the centre of the Norwegian Resistance. But Erling Malm stopped them. He hung himself in the cell on 7th November. Ole Jacob Malm escaped to Sweden 14 days later. (Ulstein, 2006:133-135, Ulstein, 1985:6).

People who before the war were active in Nansenhjelp were also generally involved in providing the hiding places for the Jews, when the mass arrests started on 26th October, 1942. However, it was not easy to get hideouts for them and time after time those who were sent to the border returned because something had gone wrong. Then they needed to be hidden again immediately and sometimes the families which had provided the shelter had already taken another person into hiding, so the women and men from Nansenhjelp had to search for new people willing to accommodate a Jew. Most of the time it happened in an improvised way, and as important as to find a room, it was to provide a ration card and money. The atmosphere was hasty because they who were on free feet were in pursuit. Rescuers and Jews themselves were confused whether the October action was like the previous ones where captives could

return home again after a short while and their mood varied from dread to optimism. (Ulstein, 2006:132).

Some Jews found shelter in hospitals, where the doctors falsified the case-records and stated some medical reasons why they had to be kept in hospital. Two of the hospitals which were involved in such rescue were Ullevaal and Lovisenberg. In Ullevaal during the first days of persecution in October were more than 8 Jewish men, but they did not stay long because there were people who organized transport for them to escape to Sweden. In Lovisenberg Deaconess hospital the influx was so great that the departments were blasted. Later they also used the cellar and the attic to place the fleeing Jews. The relationship between the Christian church and Jews had not always been so good during the past but here most of them trusted the priest. The Jews were extremely anxious, they prayed in distress and fear, and waited in queues to the priest to get an intercession. He tried to comfort and talk to them throughout evenings and nights but the panic was still in the air. (Ulstein, 2006:131)

3.5.5. The Second Action – the Arrest of All Jews in Norway

On 25th November, 1942 police received an order to arrest all Jews living in Norway. If before the first action many policemen were not aware what they were assigned to do, then this evening they didn't have any doubt of what would happen. Many of them started to quickly warn people who they knew had Jewish contacts. Many phones rang in the houses of resistance movement members and secret messages were given to them and many went out to take Jews in hiding.

It was a hard night for the rescuers in Oslo, because most of the Jews in the country, approximately 1100, lived in the Oslo area. Most of them did not have a phone, so many rescuers drove around the city to warn them and take them away from their homes where they were in danger. But it was night, so many people were asleep, doors and gates were locked and sometimes there were no chances of warning them. Many of the Jews needed to find a safe place on their own and to do it until the dawn. Suddenly an air alert went off and people were supposed to leave the streets. However, there was no airstrike that night but police had done this to prevent people of going to warn the Jews.

Sigrid Helliesen Lund from Nansenhjelp also went to take into cover a previously arrested rabbi Samuel's wife, children and relatives. Most of them were placed in a house on the same street where her brother lived but there already were too many people. She arranged that some of the children will be hidden by two elderly women and took them by hand and rushed out. Another air alert had gone off but they continued to run in the streets anyway.

Suddenly a car with searchlights approached, she threw herself down at a fence, dragged the children under and waited anxiously. When the car was gone, they rushed to the house where they finally got a shelter.

But there were still many more who needed help so she hastened away to the Jewish orphanage that needed to be emptied until the morning. Sigrid Helliesen Lund warned Gerda Tandberg from Baerum who agreed to take all the children even if she had only two rooms. They wakened up all the children, packed their small backpacks and four-five at time lied on the floor of doctor's Nic Waal's small car in front of the backseat. There were 22 children who needed to be driven away and by the dawn of day the orphanage was empty. (Ulstein, 2006:142-145).

On 26th November every living Jew was brought to the quay in Oslo where a ship waited to bring them to death camps in Germany. Among crying children, terrified mothers and sorrowful men stood professor Victor Moritz Goldschmid. Suddenly an SS man approached him and asked for his name. When he said who he was, the soldier told that he was not supposed to be there and took him down from the ship. Actually, some of Goldschmid's friends had worked hard to get him released, begging the Norwegian police chef to save him because his work would be essential to improve the food production during the wartime. He was released with a condition that he would not flee from Norway, however, his friends insisted to do that. He was in doubt but finally decided to inform rector Hoel, who was a nazi that he unfortunately had to leave the country. As soon as he had done it, he departed with another 40 people on one of the Home front's routes to Sweden. It was 18th December, 1942. (Ulstein, 2006:148).

3.6. Could More Norwegian Jews Have Been Saved?

The attitude towards the Jews was mostly indifferent and therefore the help campaign to rescue the Jewish community in Norway was not as remarkable as in Denmark. Newspapers and organizations did not call for mobilizing in order to help them, except the Norwegian church which sent strong protests to Quisling demanding to stop racial hatred and Jewish persecutions. The Catholic Church requested to exempt those Jews who had transferred to Catholicism from the newly introduced anti-Jewish laws. (Tjelmeland, 2003:30-31). This of course was mostly based on the fact that the press was controlled by the occupying force and Nasjonal Samling and was under a strict censorship which meant that most of the population would not know the volume of Jewish persecutions.

The tendency that the saving actions were not an issue on question has now changed into a discussion whether the Home front gave lower priority to the Jews compared to other Norwegian refugees when it came to transporting them to safe places in Sweden. The parallels are drawn back to the 1930s and the reluctance to accept more refugees from Europe. Norway is often compared with Denmark which was successful as to get as many as 95% or 7220 Jews over to Sweden. However, the action against the Danish Jews came a year later than the one against the Norwegian Jewry, and Denmark had still their own government. . (Tjelmeland, 2003:30-31).

However, if one looks from another perspective, most of the Norwegian Jews, approximately 1300–1400 were saved, and the comparison with Denmark is not possible because the Germans used a nazified Norwegian state apparatus to accomplish its aims, people were threatened with death penalty if they helped the Jews and most importantly, there was a time difference when the actions were carried out. In Norway it was a question of some hours during one night while the Danes had some days between the warnings and persecutions. And also when the time for the Danish Jews came in 1943, the country already was aware what future would come for the Jews in the German occupied territories.

There were also complications with the refugee traffic routes in Norway, as they were of limited capacity and it was difficult to transport varied Jewish groups, including people from all ages, carrying baggage with them while walking many kilometres in very hilly and demanding terrain. The help organizations were simply not suited for a situation when very different and numerous people needed to get over the border quickly, including the consideration for security for the whole rescue mechanism.

Nevertheless, there were many people who made a huge effort to save the Jews but before the real actions started, only few Jews fled the country as it was not clear what to expect and many were still optimistic until the last moment. (Tjelmeland, 2003:31)

3.7. Post-war Period in Norway

In the period after the war, there was an intense discussion about the Norwegian collaboration in Jewish persecutions and Quisling's regime's anti-semitic policy and even the universal dislike of the Jewish element in the Norwegian society what was observed even in expressions of the Norwegian government in exile. One of the arguments was that in 1945 the government decided that those around 150 stateless Jews who escaped from Norway to Sweden, among them some who had lived in Norway for decades and had children with the Norwegian citizenship, will not get their expenses covered to return home as the Norwegian

citizens would. There was also small willingness to issue residence permits to the stateless people in the post-war period, most of them who received it, had done something extra for their new “native country” either in relation to military or to merchant navy.

On the other hand, there were political actions during the war, which tried to help the Jews, for example, in 1943 the Norwegian Minister of Justice, Trygve Lie, after the initiative from the Norwegian Jews in Sweden, came with a proposal to the British government to bring about an exchange between the Norwegian Jews and German prisoners of war.

Another point which is used to show the negative attitude from the Norwegians was the work on the settlement of economic losses during the war when the losses of the Jews were judged after the same criterions as of the other Norwegian citizens, not taking into account their tragic fate during the war. The Jews got less in economic settlement than NS regime had taken away from them. The poor and bureaucratic economic settlement was after all carried out in a chaotic and confusing situation where the brutality of the German occupation had to be cleared up quickly enough. But there is no doubt that when the Jewish tragedy came into light in its full amount, the attitude in society and from authorities changed.

When the war was over, many millions in Europe were expelled from their homes, many had a status as “displaced persons” (DP), including many thousands of the Jews who survived the war. Many Jews were looking for places in DP stations, hoping that it would be short stop on their way to Palestina. The first initiative from Norway to accommodate the Jews on temporary basis came from rabbi Marcus Norock in February 1946 who appealed to the Prime Minister Gerhardsen to provide a shelter for as many Jews as Norway had lost during the war while they are waiting when they could reach Palestina or other countries where they had relatives. The government in its turn decided to give entry permit to 200-300 Jews with the requirement that they were experts who could enter the labour market immediately and provide a shelter with help of the Norwegian Jews. The government was scared that a bigger influx of the Jews could rise the anti-semitic mood again. However, in September the same year, Norway opened its border for 600 Jews so that it would refer to the number they had lost during the war. Practically, there was not so big interest about Norway, so basically, the number of arriving Jews was around 500, from whom 200 emigrated in a period of few of years. (Tjelmeland, 2003:31-34).

What regards the information published in the press shortly after war, is that the first year after the war, the Norwegian newspapers interviewed the Jews who had returned back and regularly published descriptions about the concentration camps and the trials of war criminals. Also Christian organizations arranged some memorial meetings in the name of all

the Jews who did not return home. However, most often discussion in post-war media was about the question about Palestine and the freedom fights there. (Mendelsohn, 1986:337).

3.8. The Post-war Research and Publications about Jewish Situation in Norway during World War II

Although a short time after the war, there were already some writings about Norway and its role in World War II, the resistance movement and also the Norwegian refugees' fate in Sweden, there was not too much specific attention paid to Jewish situation during the war in Norway. First writings regarding Jewish experiences were basically in medicine, more precisely, psychology.

Some psychologists and researchers started examining prisoners from the concentration camps immediately after war. For example, already during 1947-1951 Danish doctors examined 1500 earlier prisoners to discover the psychological damage. However, a big contribution in this field was made by Leo Eitinger, who himself first came to Norway in 1939 as a Czechoslovakian refugee and later was transported to Auschwitz together with other Jews but survived and came back. In his doctor dissertation in 1958 he investigated how the extreme stress could lead to higher risk to psychical diseases among the prisoners of concentration camps. His even more popular work was written together with other Norwegian doctors about somatic and psychical long time consequences after being pent in concentration camps. Also later Norwegian physicians examined people who had psychological disturbances and posttraumatic stress syndrome and who had been imprisoned in concentration camps to continue longitudinal measurements. (Lavik, 1999:78).

The most detailed writings about the Jewish history is done by Oskar Mendelsohn who included all the Jewish history in Norway during 300 years in two volumes, first about the time until the end of 1930s, and the second - including World War II and modern times ("Jødenes historie I Norge gjennom 300 år", 1969 and 1986). In his work he has carefully studied not only the historical events but also a wide range of literature and publications by the Jews or about the Jews. In his second volume he has written a separate chapter about the post-war literature which deals with the Jews in World War II.

He mentions that in 1946 the author Elsa Dickman published the first work about what happened to the Jews from Norway but in 1948 the author Eva Scheer wrote a novel about one Jewish family's fate. The third one was the publisher Max Tau, whose first novel which was based on a refugee fate and was published in 1946. In two later works he wrote about the last years in Germany before he left it and the wartime in Norway. Another survivor of the World War II, Moritz Nachstern described his experience during arrest and living in

concentration camps, and published it in 1949. Interestingly, the next memoirs about survival under the Nazi regime written by Herman Sachnowitz, were published almost 30 years later, in 1976.

Except the Jewish writers, there were also the Norwegians who had written about the years of the war but most of them were in the literary works. In 1950 Ragnar Kvam wrote a novel based on the Jewish persecutions in Norway and Romania but a great deal was devoted to the post-war years where he stressed that there was a lack of sympathy about the necessity for Jews to have home in Palestine. During 1950s and 1960s there were quite a few works of literature including topics on the Jewish situation during the war or at least at some point throwing light on this issue. In addition, there was also poetry inspired by the Jewish tragic fate published in Norway but in the period short after the war.

The first literature about the Jewish refugees' fate and their rescue was written by Arne M. Torgersen in 1970 and Odd Nansen also in 1970. Sigrid Helliesen Lund in her autobiography in 1981 writes about how she rescued Jewish children from Czechoslovakia. In 1976 a book about anti-semitism in Norway was written by Leo Eitinger and Hallvard Rieber-Mohn. (Mendelsohn, 1986:406-417).

But the biggest contribution in the Jewish refugee literature was made by Ragnar Ulstein who had continuously worked on the general refugee question in Norway during the World War II and written both about the North Sea traffic ("Englandsfarten" in two volumes, 1965 and 1967), about the Sweden's traffic ("Svensketrafikken" in three volumes, 1974 and 1977), and recently about Jewish escape in particular ("Jødar på flukt", 1995, 2006). However, already in "Svensketrafikken" he discussed the Jewish flight to Sweden in some chapters. (Ugelvik Larsen, 1999:14).

Another historian who has researched the Holocaust in Norway, is Bjarte Bruland, who has several publications in his account, starting from his dissertation in 1995 about the attempt to exterminate the Norwegian Jews which was followed by several books about this topic in 1997 and 2003.

Ugelvik Larsen offers his division of discussion and debate about Norwegian war history and post-war time. Period 1945-1950 he calls "period of pain" when experiences and attitudes were published in all media with big intensity and it is characterized by the tendency to let know everything to everyone. The main topics were debates about the legal settlement, military settlement and political settlement. 1950s he calls the "pioneer phase" and says that there was little of critical debate about Norway during the war with some exceptions. The third period – 1960s became the time for "initiative for revisionism" where the elements of simplification and consensus played an important role together with the critical approach.

1970s was characterized as a period of “myths under criticism” with revisionist views on common myths about Norway in the wartime. 1980s was “first period of Norwegian historians’ fight”. It gave new impulses and new thinking, and the third generation historians got down to new researches. At this time also media were generally concerned and took part in the debate. Many writings were published both about the NS and different conditions in Norway during the WWII which were not discussed before. And the 1990s could probably be called “against-revisionism” period with problematizing the most sensitive topics of the war and post-war period but, on the other hand, there was criticism against the relativization of war history debate. Some new topics were highlighted, like other “losers” of the war - the traitors, the “German girls” and the children of war etc. (Ugelvik Larsen, 1999:19-28).

In general, there were different writings about World War II history in Norway and part of it also included the discussion of the Jewish people different fate but later also specific books were published just about the Jewish history in Norway and the rescue of the Jews during the time of the Nazi atrocities, however, except the Jewish memories short after the war the more important research was started only in 1970s and continued later with the works of Ragnar Ulstein and Oskar Mendelsohn.

4.RESCUE OF LATVIAN JEWS DURING WORLD WAR II

4.1. Jews in Latvia and Attitudes Towards them before World War II

4.1.1. Jews in Latvia during the Period until World War I

Although a small number of the Jews was living in the territory of Latvia since 16th and 17th century, visible growth of the Jewish population was observed only in 18th century, mostly in Kurzeme and Latgale. The first Jewish community appeared in Piltene in the 16th century as the bishop of Kurland needed rich and active people and invited Jewish merchants to live there. In Central Europe the Jews were considered better tax payers and initiators of business activity. Later they spread through whole Kurzeme and Zemgale. The first Jews arriving to Latgale in 16th century were fleeing from Ivan the Terrible troops. (Dribins, n.d). They were retail traders and craftsmen and often faced economic discrimination but there were no traits of religious anti-semitism. The economic competition was often the main reason for Jewish dislike in most of the European countries. On the other hand, when discussing Latvian peasants' attitudes towards the Jews, then they were more accommodating because the Jewish were known as buyers of rural products and deliverer of needed small goods for the rural farms. However, also here the main dislike towards the Jews was from German citizens and noblemen who saw the Jews as their competitors in trading. And again at the same time Latvian press was positive towards the Jews until 1870s and the hate towards the Jews was also not present in Latvian folk songs. (Stranga, 2002:90-91).

The situation started to change in 1870s and 1880s when the number of the Jews rapidly increased bringing along intense Jewish urbanization tendencies and they became more prosperous. The rapid increase happened together with strengthening of the Latvian national consciousness but the Latvians met the strong and long existing German and Jewish bourgeois competition. The Jews who were temporary inhabitants in Riga, in 1941 succeeded to obtain regulations that allowed them permanent inhabitant status but not citizenship. The opening of a state-funded Jewish secular school in 1940 was a big achievement. And also a first synagogue was built in Riga in 1851. These achievements made the Jewish community grow stronger. (Dribins, n.d.). Later the Latvian and Jewish relationship was influenced by the change of the policy from the tsarist Russia towards the Jews. Although since the beginning of 19th century, the tsarist Russia was not exactly tolerant with the Jews it was not the modern anti-semitism known later in 20th century. (Stranga, 2002:92-94). Although the most of the population tolerated Jewish refugees from other Russian Empire's regions, negative attitudes also appeared in the bourgeois part of the society. The end of 19th century was the beginning of anti-semitism in territory of Latvia. (Dribins, n.d.).

The number of the Jews residing in Latvia was the biggest in the eve of the World War I – around 190 000 people from whom 85% were engaged in trading, production and craftsmanship. During the World War I when the German troops invaded Courland in May 1915, the Russian Army commander accused the Jews for spying for the German army, signalling to the Germans and hiding the German soldiers behind the front lines and therefore he ordered the Jews to leave Courland in 24h hours. Courland Jews considered themselves proud members of the German culture and therefore such situation was possible. Thus, around 40 000 Courland Jews were deported to the Russian interior. Many perished and only around 17 000 returned after war. It was no surprise that around 1200 Jews joined the Latvian National Army in the independence war 1918-1920. (Anders, 2010:12). During the war the number of the Jews diminished altogether to 100 000 people. (Stranga, 2002:96-105).

4.1.2. Jews in the Democratic Period of Independent Latvia 1918-1934

In the dawn of foundation of the independent state of Latvia, the representatives of the minorities like the Baltic Germans and Jews took part in establishing process, for example, in Tautas Padome (Latvian People's Council) 3 Jews from the left wing joined the meeting in 2nd December, 1918 and appealed for the introduction of the autonomy for all national minorities. The situation in Latvia was chaotic during the first years of War of Liberation and independence and the Jewish minority itself was not united because to the different languages it spoke and contradictory relationship with the new state, the non-Jewish society and between different Jewish groups. (Stranga, 2002:98-100)

In 1919 Tautas Padome adopted a law about the minority school system with its own board to give them rights to education and culture thus stimulating more loyalty from minorities. In the first Latvian Parliament which was elected in 1922, five Jewish parties were represented and in spite of being multishaped society, during years of independence of Latvia the Jews almost always had representation in the Parliament appropriate to their number in the country. No other Jewish community in Eastern Europe gained such results in political representation. Indeed there were no basic minority right violations either so in general minorities in the democratic period enjoyed the same rights as everyone else. (Stranga, 2002:101-103).

In 1922 the first radical anti-semitical organization “Latvju nacionālais klubs” (Latvian National Club) was established whose only aim was anti-semitism and there began the first institutionally organized racism. They distributed leaflets agitating people to boycott the Jewish shops, and later not allowing people to enter these shops as well. Later the Jewish students in university became ridiculed and discriminated by the radical fellow students. In

1925 the Latvian National Club organized the first violent actions against Jews, first in 23rd January they threw a hand grenade in synagogue in Riga, and in the beginning of February they threw a bottle with poisonous substances in the premises of the Jewish social democratic organization "Perec". The authorities then closed the club but it continued its work under another name. (Stranga, 2002:109-123).

In 1927 a new anti-semitism wave rolled over the country when new addition to the Latvian citizenship law was issued. This amendment granted the Latvian citizenship to persons who had resided in Latvia for at least 6 months prior to August 1, 1914 and who could provide proof of this (even if they had not acquired permanent residency). (Dribins, n.d.). It meant that 3000-4000 more Jews would become Latvian citizens automatically. At the same time the nationalist movement was rather popular, with 800 members in Riga, and 3000-3500 in whole Latvia. (Stranga, 2002:125-130)

Latvia was hit by the global economic depression in 1929-1932 and also many Jewish companies faced the threat of bankruptcy and unemployment in the fields they usually managed their businesses. However, this was the period for the harshest rise of anti-semitism, firstly, because the nationalist party "Nacionālais Bloks" (The National Block) did not succeed to be represented in the parliament after the elections in 1931 and its leader Arveds Bergs established a new nationalist and anti-semitic organization "Ugunskrusts" (Firecross), which was renamed "Pērkonkrusts" (Thunder Cross) in 1933 spreading hatred against the Jews and calling for restrictions on them. This party was also represented at University student council and asked to introduce limited admission for the Jewish students. "Pērkonkrusts" also started to associate the Jews with communism, although there were actually few Jews in Latvia who were in the communist party. (Stranga, 2002:130-140).

However, whole democratic period of Latvia until 1934 was characterized by not too strong anti-semitism, and even the most hysteric actions like Jewish shop boycott did not give any results. There were some physical assaults on the Jews and hooliganism towards their possessions but Latvia with its rather large Jewish population was one of the most tolerant countries in that period, except the wide range of anti-semitic publications in newspapers. (Stranga, 2002:152-154).

4.1.3. Jews during the Authoritarian Period in Latvia, 1934-1940

On 15th May, 1934, the Prime Minister of Latvia, Kārlis Ulmanis seized the power in Latvia and transformed it to an authoritarian state. As the main reasons of the coup were mentioned communist, social democrat, Jewish and catholic deputies who were said to be working against Latvian Latvia, against strong country. The new ideology was

etnonationalistic, the attitude towards minorities was a mixture of wide principles, concentrating on praising Latvians as a nation, and trying to exclude everything what was not authentic Latvian in the society, creating not so tolerant attitudes towards the Jews and Baltic Germans and other foreign workers as the Poles, Belarussians and Russian and Jewish refugees from the Soviet Union. However, the Jews were not main target in the “national revolution”, they were the Baltic Germans who Ulmanis disliked the most as they had ruled the Latvians so long and in 1930s tended to support the Nazi regime in Germany, promoting the idea of including Latvia in the Third Reich. (Stranga, 2002:163-175).

Ulmanis’ regime, although restricted the Jews in their economic life, was not anti-semitic in its core. For example, the famous Berlin Opera conductor Leo Blech was invited to lead the National Opera in Riga after he was forced to leave Germany. He was a Jewish refugee from Germany and Latvia before it lost its independence was the last country in Europe who accepted refugees from Germany and Austria. It would not be possible if the Latvian authoritarian regime was anti-semitic.

In the last two years of Latvian independence, 1939-1940, more restrictions were implemented towards minorities, the tax burden heavily overwhelmed the Jewish companies, also the last Jewish managed newspaper “Segodnja” was nationalized. The overly open opinions about two aggressors – the Nazi Germany and the USSR were not tolerable as they could annoy the both powers. A few weeks before Latvia became occupied by the USSR, Ulmanis issued the Economic service law which would enforce obligatory enrolment in forced labour in countryside to improve the catastrophic situation there, aiming with specific rigour towards the Jews “who would finally be forced to do a productive work”. It would be hard to predict how the authoritative regime in Latvia would have developed if it had not been occupied by the USSR on 17th June, 1940 but there was a certain trend that restrictions towards the Jews gradually would have continued. (Stranga, 2002:225-238).

The Jewish attitude in 1939, realizing Hitler’s and Stalin’s willingness to escalate the conflict to war, tended rather to choose occupation from the East side than the anti-semitic Nazi regime. When in 1939 after the demand of the Soviet Union the Red Army settled in several military bases in Latvia, Jewish merchants in Latvian cities Liepaja and Ventspils showed their joy about the unexpected customers what caused suspicions about their loyalty to Latvia. Also when on 17th June, 1940 the Soviet tanks entered Riga, among their welcomers were both the Russians, Jews and Latvians, however, constituting only a small share of the whole Jewish population of Riga, thus it cannot be generalized that all the Jews were satisfied with the Soviet invasion. (Stranga, 2002:225-238).

4.2. Latvian Jewish Help to European Jewish Refugees

The attitude towards the Jewish refugees from Germany and its occupied territories of Austria and Czechoslovakia was not welcoming in Europe and the USA, and Latvia was not an exception. However, Latvia was also not a primary aim for refugees, they were more interested in the United Kingdom, the USA, France, Switzerland and Scandinavia, but in 1938 when the situation was critical, the refugees tried to find a shelter wherever they could.

In 1933-1934 the first Jews from the Nazi territory arrived in Latvia but the number in two years did not exceed 200 and most of them used Latvia as transit country to continue the trip to Palestine. The Government did not want a significant influx of refugees because it was anxious about provoking wide anti-semitism break-out but it allowed a limited number to come, never in groups, so that they would not be so noticeable. Latvia never undertook any financial liabilities towards the newcomers, so all the responsibility about their existence was on themselves or the Jewish organizations or mostly on one unselfish man – rabbi Mordehaj Dubin, who even nowadays in the circle of the orthodox Jews is called the greatest Jewish personality ever lived in Latvia – who never refused to help and did it with much effort in 1930s. Dubin had good connections with Ulmanis and used personal, unofficial diplomacy to lobby some questions he considered as necessary to be solved in order to help other Jews. Not being a Zionist himself, he nevertheless cooperated with any organization to get help in reception of foreign Jews, even two Zionist organizations “Olim” and “Trumpeldor”. (Stranga, 2002:204-209).

The arriving Jews often survived from donations from other Jews, many got help from relatives or from rabbi Dubin, and most often they did not have any occupation in Riga. Some city dwellers, like Rozalia Vazbucka gave a shelter and subsistence to two refugees from Vienna. Many inhabitants of Riga expressed their humanity for the victims of Hitler's regime, however, the attitude not always was accommodating. They brought anxiety and disturbance in the still atmosphere in which the Latvian Jews used to live and rouse more reluctance and distrust than sympathy.

Also in Latvia the anti-semitic mood became more active due to the rumours that there were large numbers of the Austrian Jews who were let in the country, there were speculations with numbers from a couple of hundreds to 2000-3000 which was not true. Actually, before the annexation of Austria, there were only 118 refugees from Germany residing in Latvia and the newcomers were not measured in many hundreds. The only places where the Jewish refugees settled were three cities – Riga, Liepaja and Daugavpils, the rest of Latvia did not even see them. The total number in the beginning of 1940 showed only 329 refugees. (Stranga, 2002:204-209). In 1939 the Jews composed 4,4% of the population in Latvia.

(Anders, 2010:11). However, in total there came more than a thousand refugees from Germany and Austria, and it increased the Jewish population to exceed 95 000. (Dribins, n.d.).

Problem situation appeared when in October, 1938 a German ship entered the port in Riga with 77 expelled Jews from Vienna. The ship rambled from one port to another hoping to unload the miserable people somewhere. The authorities refused to let them go ashore in spite of Dubin's efforts. Later in December, the consular department of Latvia was prohibited even to issue a transit visa to the Jews from the Nazi occupied territories, however, interestingly this decision was not perfectly obeyed and refugees continued to arrive to Latvia but one by one, never in larger noticeable groups. Most of them had relatives there but even those without relatives were sometimes accepted.

However, the government hoped to get part of the refugees away together with the Baltic German emigration to Germany. There was a requirement to make registers of all German citizens with the Jewish origin and to question their unwillingness to leave Latvia, however there is no information that they were violently expelled from the country. (Stranga, 2002:204-209).

In general, Latvia was neither benevolent, neither ill-disposed as a refugee admitter. There was much of the initiative from rabbi and deputy Dubin who really strived to accommodate and feed the newcomers but otherwise the attitude from the Latvian society was rather cold.

4.3. Jews during First Year of Soviet Occupation in Latvia 1940-1941

When the Jews in Latvia got to know that Latvia had accepted the proposal to let in troops from the USSR they received this message as a relief as they had heard what had happened to the Jews in the Nazi occupied Poland. Thereby they viewed the Soviet Union as the lesser evil.

During the beginning of the Nazi occupation propaganda about the Jewish collaboration in the communist party and KGB was widespread. However, it was clear that they did not receive the most prominent and high-level positions in the communist party in Latvia, however, the left-wing Jews actively participated in the formation of the administrative apparatus. They were appointed as employees of commissariats, managers of nationalized enterprises, functionaries of the Party and Soviet bodies and political workers. (Dribin, n.d.). There were also the Jews who were working in KGB and carried out repressions towards the inhabitants of Latvia. It is found that three out of four officers who signed orders about deportations and shootings of the Latvian inhabitants, were the Jews –

S.Shustin, Z.Krivicki, A.Brezgin. Shustin was sent from Moscow and, thus was not a local Jew. The Latvians badly disliked the Jewish apparent joy and collaboration with the Soviet occupants, though each of the Jewish organizations had different motivation why they tried to get closer to power.

Until the elections in 15-16th July, 1940 the Soviets unambiguously promised that they will combat the anti-semitism and many Jews, of course, sympathized with these statements. Immediately after the elections this topic disappeared and repressions started on Zionist, orthodox and other Jewish organizations. The massive Stalin's deportations in 14th June, 1941 included 1221 (1212 in Dribins, 2002:78) or 12,5% Jews, here the proportion of the Jews was three times as big as their proportion in whole society. Some authors claim that the number was bigger. The Soviet Union later also proved that it had its own type of anti-semitism. (Stranga, 2002:240-246).

Ironically, some researchers suggest that the Soviet deportations of the Jews saved their lives, as only 1000 of remaining 70 000 Jews after the Red terror stayed alive during the Holocaust. However, the survival rate for the Jews shipped to Russia was around one third. (Lumans, 2006:227).

4.4. Nazi Occupation of Latvia and Actions towards Jews 1941-1945

On 22nd June, 1941 Hitler launched invasion of the Soviet Union called operation Barbarossa. This was a racially motivated war for the conquest of *Lebensraum* and destruction of the Soviet Union. The concept of having New European Racial Order with the Germans as dominant ethnicity, included acquiring additional living space which would provide the critical agricultural space and natural resources to ensure the prosperity and well-being of population of the Third Reich. The Baltic States were designed to be a part of the Lebensraum as "protectorates" with the racially less desirable part of population expelled eastward, and the racially acceptable elements converted culturally into the Germans. (Lumans, 2006:150). The Baltic people were categorized somewhere between the Germans and Slavs but also considered as dying out nations, so that in any case the Germans would take over. Later as the war progressed, racial value of the Latvians increased in the eyes of the German Nazis as they witnessed their collaborative attitude and dislike towards the Jews. (Lumans, 2006:140-151). However, it cannot be generalized to the whole of the Latvian population.

On 26th June, 1941 the Nazi troops were already in the East part of Latvia, Daugavpils and on 28th Western harbour city Liepaja was seized. By 1st July the Soviets had abandoned

Riga allowing the Nazis to enter it without fight. As the Red Army retreated, the local Soviet authorities tried to organize a civilian evacuation. Some managed to escape with the convoy ships from Riga but the majority of refugees, including tens of thousands of the Jews, headed eastwards by land routes. However, the 26th June seizure of Daugavpils cut off many refugees from their flight to Russia. The estimated numbers of Latvian refugees was 40 000-70 000, among them around 20 000 Jews. Apparently more Jews could have escaped if the Soviets would not have barred many from crossing the border being scared of infiltrated Nazi spies. When the Soviets opened their border to all refugees the Nazis had already detached the main escape route, dooming many Jews for destruction. Only 10 000 – 15 000 of the Jews managed to escape, and the rest were not allowed to enter. (Lumans, 2006:151-156, 227)

There was of paradoxical atmosphere during the first days of invasion among the Latvians, although they were faced with a new occupation, there were still fresh memories from the Red Terror and recent events of mass deportations of more than 15 000 people and shootings of the 1300 people in whole Latvia before the Soviet forces withdrew, and therefore a elation of “liberation” and revenge overwhelmed many people when they saw the Nazi tanks entering the country. However, the Nazis would later often remind the Latvians that they freed them from the Bolsheviks and therefore the Latvians were obligated to them. (Lumans, 2006:157-159). The attitudes among the Jews were not united, for example, Edward Anders, a survivor of the Holocaust, explains that his family, when they got to know that Hitler had attacked the Soviet Union, rooted for the Germans as the lesser evil. Even they had heard of anti-semitism and concentration camps, the family had lived under the German occupation in World War I and trusted the German civilization and did not expect more than physical labour and some loss of civil rights. However, they were unaware about the killing of tens of thousands of the Jews in Poland during 1939/1940 because local press did not write about it and they did not hear anything about in the radio and at the same time was sickened by the Red terror of the Soviet Union. But not all the Jews had so optimistic view about the advancing fate and abandoned the country, if they were lucky enough as many were not allowed to leave. (Anders, 2010:46).

In 1941, Hitler had a plan to exterminate all the Jews from the European continent and for that should mass killing polygons established in the occupied the Soviet territories. People who were appointed for this task were Reichsführer of the SS Heinrich Himmler and the head of the security service Reinhard Heydrich. Plans how to kill the Jews were elaborated by civil servants together with the army leadership in the early 1941. (Dribins, 2002:79). Already on 29th May, 1941 there was a conference for the Nazi officials where the mayor guidelines of propaganda for to-be-conquered East European lands were elaborated. It included vision that

if the Nazis would portray the Jews as main culprits, then local inhabitants would liquidate them on their own initiative, as well the most radical Communist functionaries, based on the revenge against the main oppressors. Only when the Nazis got acquainted with the local situation they would take over the settling of the matters with those remained. (Ezergailis, 2005:8).

Although there are authors who argue that in the days or hours during the interregnum period when there was power vacuum the Latvians spontaneously sprang up all across Latvia and joined the hunt for the Red Army stragglers and fleeing communist functionaries and besides that partisans and self-defence units engaged in persecuting and murdering the Jews, Ezergailis and Anders argue that the first organizational steps towards killing of the Jews were made by the Wehrmacht. The Nazis were instructed to provoke locals into these “spontaneous” actions already on the 2nd July during the first days of the occupation. Later the Nazis often photographed and filmed the Latvians and other non-Germans performing the killings to share the responsibility and to prove that the locals murdered the Jews from their own initiative. (Lumans, 2006:234). However, Edward Anders himself and referring also to communication with Margers Vestermanis concluded that there was no evidence of spontaneous killings of the Jews in the interregnum (hours or days), except one episode in Riga, which was based on robbery. Anders quote Vestermanis who claimed: “It was an ideal opportunity to settle accounts with the Jews, a unique chance for pogroms and massacres. But nothing happened. Nowhere!”. The murders were not started by individuals but by Einsatzgrupp A teams. (Anders, 2010:146).

Following their plan to kill the remaining European Jews already in May, 1941 Himmler formed special killing formations – *Einsatzgruppen* which would operate in the occupied East, following the army. For example, *Einsatzgruppe A*, which arrived to Riga on 1st July, was formed from 990 men, including forces from Gestapo, Criminal Police, Order Police and Waffen SS. *Einsatzgruppe A* was distinguished by its extensive utilization of local personnel in annihilation of political and racial enemies. There were the Latvian volunteers who wanted to join and there were even emigrated “Perkonkrusts” members, who came from the Reich together with SS and were trained as SD (Security Service) agents in Germany. (Lumans, 2006:166-167). In addition, also Wehrmacht and the navy took the first steps towards the extermination of the Jews. The anti-Jewish orders were issued in the beginning of July, prohibiting them from being on the streets between 18:00 and 7:00, go shopping in the stores etc. Later the Jewish registration followed, marking them by yellow stars, isolation in ghettos and finally killing. (Stranga, 2008:22). However, all this lead to creating the image that the Baltic people are killing the Jews themselves from their free will and based on the

hate towards the Bolsheviks. On 22nd July, 1941 Hitler stated that the Jewish killing had started and that is Germanless, meaning that it was a collective enterprise of the Baltic peoples. This message was disseminated in the areas influenced by the Nazis. Later in November, Himmler in his speech in Vilnius pointed out the “savage revenge from the local people”. Thus, a false notion was created about the Baltic peoples’ initiative and special role in Holocaust. (Ezergailis, 2005:9-10, Dribins, 2002:80-81).

The first shootings started in the night between 23rd and 24th June in Grobina where 6 Jews were killed in the church graveyard. Next killings took place in Durbe, Priekule, Asite, where 35 Jews were shot. This was the Einsatzkommando 1A which carried out this task, commanded by Valter Stahlecker. Stahlecker tried to fulfil the order of including local anticommunists and anti-semites in the Jewish pogroms. The first group was established in Jelgava on 29th June, 1941, lead by a journalist, a member of “Perkonkrusts”, Martins Vagulans. This unit consisted of 300 men and was involved of killing 2000 Jews in Jelgava and whole Zemgale during the summer and burning the synagogue together with its rabbi. However, these actions were commanded by SD officers. (Dribins, 2002:83). Stahlecker was the first who gave descriptions about the Holocaust in Latvia, when he reported the results to the Security Police Headquarters in Berlin on 15th October, 1941. He reported that the Jews were killed upon higher orders and that the Security Police had formed self-defence groups from the most reliable members of the population. It was meant that after the Nazi initiative the self-purging would start against the Jews-Bolsheviks. After exerting a proper influence on the Latvian Auxiliary Police, they succeeded to initiate the Jewish pogrom in Riga, killing around 400 people and burning the synagogue. He asserted that it was more difficult to initiate cleansing operations and pogroms in Latvia, since a general pacification of the population in Riga occurred very quickly. So this means that locals were somewhat reluctant to kill the Jews. (Ezergailis, 2005:12-13).

The Nazis did not start the mass murder before they had established a Latvian auxiliary police or *Schutzmannschaften* as it was planned to make it believable that these execution actions were carried out after the local initiative. One part of recruited were in the killing squads, but next to them were also locals who guarded the captured Jews, as well as lead them to the execution places. Locals were made to count and sort the Jewish personal belongings, this was one of the largest groups, who shared the acquisitions and collected them. The most valuable things were taken by the Nazis themselves but the locals did not find fault to grab everything what was left. The gains sometimes were ridiculous, like some pieces of clothes, and that shows the amorality and greediness of people who lived next to the Jews for many decades. (Stranga, 2008:25).

Those Latvians recruited for the killing squads were described as “savage Jews haters”, among them Lt.col. Voldemars Veiss and the former policeman Viktors Arajs. Veiss quickly organized an auxiliary police unit of 400 Latvians to seek out, apprehend and destroy the enemy – communists and the Jews. When the commander of *Einsatzgruppen* Stahlecher met Viktors Arajs, he delightedly sanctioned the formation of another unit of collaborating Latvians, 200-300 under Arajs’s direction. Arajs commando became one of the most notorious Nazi manslaughter groups who not only executed the Jews in Latvia but moved also Lithuania and Belarus. The estimated number is 26 000 people who were killed by Arajs commando in Latvia. (Lumans, 2006:237-241).

Although individual killings began immediately after the Nazi occupation, for example, Ezergailis claims that the first atrocities happened in Pardaugava, before 1st July, 1941 when the Nazi troops entered the Riga city centre. Later Arajs’s commando task was to torch the synagogues and to pick up the Jewish men (men were killed first in Riga) and bring them to Riga Central Prison. Later they were taken to Bikernieki forest, shot and buried in large ditches. (Ezergailis, 2005:107). The first mass shooting by Arajs’s men occurred on 6th or 7th July, 1941 with the execution of 2000 people and then continued on a regular basis, several per week, in August. On some nights they shot up to 1000 people. In addition to the evictions, beatings, arrests, tortures and shootings, the Jews experienced also their synagogues being burned down beginning from 4th July. It was not sufficient to burn only synagogues, they burned them with alive people locked inside, like it happened with the main synagogue in Riga. (Lumans, 2006:242). By mid-august about 5000 Jews had been slaughtered in Riga. (Ezergailis, 2005:107).

Liepaja, another Latvian city with remarkable Jewish population of 14 000 people was occupied a little bit earlier than Riga and experienced the Nazi atrocities as early as on 27th/29th June. The first shootings took place in the Rainis park, in the city and sand dunes and beaches outside the city. It was with the arrival of Arajs’s commando in the late July when the first mass killings occurred, and in the end of the month there had been already 4000 Jewish casualties. Daugavpils was another city with 12 000 Jewish population. On 26th June, 1941 Nazi troops arrived there and soon enough the shootings started also there. By the end of July also 4000 Jews had been killed. (Stranga, 2008:22)

The killings in countryside generally speaking started around three weeks after the Nazi arrival. In the countryside, small villages and towns the annihilation of the Jews was absolute, with no if any survivors. The killings started in mid July and were completed by the end of August. In Zemgale, most of the Jews were killed by the end of July. (Ezergailis, 2005:102). This was the case in Jelgava, where under the command of the Latvian Martins

Vagulans the locals destroyed by shootings, synagogue burnings and other atrocities virtually the whole Jewish community of 1500 people. By the end of July, Jelgava was declared *judenfrei*, free of the Jews. (Lumans, 2006:242-243). The killings were sometimes happening in several stages, at first shooting the men and afterwards women and children but in some cases of absolute destruction, like in Auce on 11th July, all the Jews were exterminated by a ten local self-defence men. (Stranga, 2008:22). Ezergailis claims that once the killing in countryside began, it was total – men, women and children were killed. In districts that did not have a SD network, the Nazis involved self-defence groups. Countryside Jews firstly were rounded up and concentrated in some holding station, like synagogue, school or barn by the local self-defence men, where they waited until the killing squads, basically Arajs's commando but also the German commandos, arrived.

The most part of the Jewish society in Latvia was killed in two main stages. First was the described period of mass shootings by *Einsatzgruppen*, or Stahlecker's period which basically lasted from July to August, 1941, including killing of many thousands in Riga, in Bikernieki forest, and practically all the Jews in province. Until September, 1941 in the country towns, like Liepaja and Daugavpils, it added up to 25 000 victims. According to commander Stahlecker's report, 32 000 of Latvia's inhabitants were murdered, 30 000 Jews and 2000 Communists. (Ezergailis, 2005:108). Edward Anders claims that until the October SS-Einsatzgruppe A with commander Walter Stahlecker had killed a half of 300 000 Baltic Jews. (Anders, 2010:1). However, Himmler was unsatisfied with the slow pace of the Jewish extermination, and he held a view that the commanders in Latvia who had to carry out the task were not effective enough. Actually, one of them, Hans Adolf Prutzman was more inclined in accumulating the Jewish as labour force for Reich than totally exterminating them. Himmler substituted him with Fridrich Jeckeln, one of the most ruthless and effective Jewish destroyers in the Eastern front. (Stranga, 2008:23-24).

On 25th October 1941, Riga ghetto was finished and the gates closed, trapping Jews behind the fence where they were doomed to death Jeckeln arrived on 15th-16th November, 1941 and immediately started extermination of the Jews from Riga. He chose a place called Rumbula, 10 km from the ghetto of Riga and ordered the killing squads to gather all the Jews from the ghetto, convey them to Rumbula, force them to undress and go to three large ditches where they were executed. In the massacre of Rumbula on 30th November and 8th December, 24 000 Jews from Riga and around 1000 Jews brought from Germany were killed. Jeckeln used his method called *Sardinenpackung* (sardine packing) where Jews were forced to descend into a huge pit and lay down with face down. The killing was done by 12 men group, in shifts of 6, delivering a shot in the nape of the neck. Every next group was layered on top

of those already shot. The killing lasted from 08:00 until 19:00, three hours after nightfall. The Jeckeln's method even surpassed the killing rates in death camp factories. To kill 25 000 people in two 10-hour days meant that 1250 were killed per hour; or 21 per minute; or one person every three seconds. In comparison with Stahlecker's method in Liepaja, it took three days from 15th-17th December, to kill 2749 people. (Ezergailis, 2005:110-111).

After Rumbula, only 5000 Jews from Riga were still alive, intended for forced labour. Starting with February, 1942 the Jews suitable for work were placed in the remains of the Riga ghetto, but later in several concentration camps, from where those who survived were sent to the camps in Germany in the summer 1944. Simultaneously with the Rumbula action, trains from Reich with the Jews onboard started to arrive to Latvia, starting from the late November 1941 until the December, 1942. Around 20 000 arrived until February, 1942, but there were some transports later on, last were the Hungarian women sent to Latvia in 1944. The estimated number of foreign Jews brought to Latvia is 25 000. (Ezergailis, 2005:114-115). Most of them were immediately brought to Bikernieki forest and killed, but the rest who were put in the concentration camps in Latvia were brought to Auschwitz in 1943. In total, from the Latvian Jews and European Jews deported to Latvia survived 1182. (Stranga, 2008:23-24)

Altogether from 94 000 Jews living in Latvia in 1935, the Nazis trapped around 67 000, of whom 62 000 were killed in 1941. However, there is a dispute about the real number of the Jews residing in Latvia in 1941, when the killings started. Since the 1934 there had been a slow Jewish migration out of Latvia, the Soviet deportation took away around 2000 more, and during June and July 1941 as many as 20 000 Jews fled Latvia to the interior of the USSR. In January 1942, there were 6000 Latvian Jews alive, in September 1944, there were around 5000 but dispersed throughout various work camps when the transportation to Germany began. How many perished in the last months in Germany is hard, if not impossible, to estimate. (Ezergailis, 2005:106, 114).

4.5.Latvian Rescue of Jews during the Nazi Occupation

The same event – the Nazi occupation, for different people caused quite contrary behaviour: some, risking their lives, rescued the Jews, while others pursued and killed them. Both of these groups were minorities because the majority of the Latvian inhabitants were basically onlookers.

The Latvians experienced severe repressions by the Soviet power and these atrocities during the Nazi occupation period were propagandized as done merely only by the Jews, generalized on the actions of some who worked in KGB, for example Shustin. Word “Jew”

became a synonym of word “bolshevik”. Thus, Latvians ascribed responsibility for the Red terror also to the Jews which initiate collaboration with the Nazis or at least shared hatred towards the Jews. The revenge motive propagandized by the Nazis to a terrorized and receptive the Latvian nation helps to explain why some Latvians actively murdered the Jews and why most of the rest stood passively and either approved or remained indifferent. (Lumans, 2006:228). Many of those who persecuted the Jews were already for a long time among the right wing nationalists and anti-semites, as well as the overall understanding during the years of independence ranked the Jews as not belonging to the Latvian nation, they always have been outsiders. However, the number of executioners and helpers among the Latvians was about 3000 (<1% of the adult male population) which indicates that it was a minor part of whole nation. (Anders, 2010:62).

The minor part of the society which stepped forward to oppose the Nazism and the persecutions of the Jews were also individuals who were risking their lives in order to save someone else lives. There never was a rescue movement as it was in Denmark or Norway, basically because of the complicated political situation before the Nazi occupation and the differences in the Nazi administration among those countries. So neither the communist supporters, nor the Latvian nationalists would show particular initiative to save the Jews. Most of them who stood up for them did it on the moral grounds. Those who chose to show mercy to individual Jews had to be aware that they will have to risk everything what they have, give up their normal lives for years and work in solidarity with family and neighbours. (Vestermanis, n.d.).

The basic way how many people helped the Jews was to buy food for them in the grocery stores because the Jews were banned of standing in line at the food stores from 2nd July, 1941. It meant that they were prohibited from buying food as there always were queues. Thus, the Jews had to ask their non-Jewish friends, neighbours or complete strangers to buy food for them. As there is no evidence of serious famine among the Jews one has to assume that this worked and many thousands of the Latvians must have been involved. The Jews paid their shoppers sometimes generously, but also the “Jew supporters” as they were called in press, had to stand in lines in many groceries as there was limited amount of food one could purchase was limited. Those people whose shopping bags bulged were often reported to police, which fined them and put their names in the newspapers, calling them “Jew Lovers” or “Traitors”. Often the people who had been friends or acquaintances with the Jews before war, turned away from them when the Nazis occupied Latvia, so they needed to rely on total strangers. However, such a large scale operation did not go unnoticed. Media condemned the Jewish helpers and called for stricter punishment. The sewer Adelina Brodele from Aluksne

was arrested because she had brought food for the Jews and had loudly complained about the persecutions of the Jews. She and her Jewish protégés were shot on 12th August. A farmer, who had given bread to the German Jews was put on Salaspils concentration camp where he perished in October, 1943. (Anders, 2010:161-162).

The situation in summer 1941, when all the Jews living in provinces were doomed to death made them who had in mind idea to help them to act quickly, not knowing how long they would need to hide the Jews. The attitude from society was mostly unresponsive and there was necessary a really strong courage to choose to rescue the “enemy”. On the other hand, there were people who referred to the Jewish hate critically and tried to back the Jews as ever they could, giving food or moral support or even taking them into hiding. Such a man was Vladimirs Vuskans from Preili who during the most intense bloodbath gave a shelter to eight Jews from whom six survived the war. In general, there were few rescue attempts during the actions in the countryside of Latvia as they happened to be the first of all. (Vestermanis, n.d.).

The museum “Jews in Latvia” continues work on looking for cases when the Jews were saved and find the possible descriptions of how was it done and who participated. The problem is the lack of information about the rescuers as the time has gone and few are still alive. This was due to the restrictive attitude about the Jewish particular fate in the Holocaust from the Soviet Union when it was forbidden to research this topic. Basically only from the last years of “perestroika” period an active work could start to find the Jewish rescuers. By the turn of the century, there were fixed 220 rescue episodes with more than 400 rescuers involved. In Edward Anders recent writings, the number of the Jews hidden by the Latvians has risen to 472 (not all survived), and the number of rescuers at least 400-450, assisted by ~1100 family members (2010:153). The most common way of rescue was hiding the Jews at home or household buildings in the countryside until the Nazi capitulation. The gathered information is often imprecise, often there is information only about the rescuer but the identities of the ones being rescued remain unknown. In 100 cases there are known the names of the Jews who were saved but no information about the compassionate people who helped them is not available. (Vestermanis, n.d.). The Museum “Jews in Latvia” has set up a map of Latvia, indicating what was the rate of survival among those hidden in different cities and towns in Latvia. For example, from 42 Jews hidden in Liepaja survived 35, from 7 in Aizpute – 1 survivor, from 24 in Daugavpils – 21, from 8 in Preili – 6, from 4 in Rezekne – 3. In Riga from 212 hidden Jewish people, 164 could greet the day of liberation. The places, where all the hidden Jews survived the war were very rear, one of them Dobeles, where Janis (Zanis) Lipke saved 26 Jews. In the most of the cases in the province of Latvia, those who survived,

were individuals who were hiding alone. Hidden they spent the years of terror away from the eyes of the rest of the neighbourhood but not always the rescue succeeded. There are many towns and villages where none of the single or couple of the hidden Jews survived as they were revealed by police or condemned by neighbours.

It is estimated that around 400-450 Jews were rescued in the territory of Latvia but more of them had been hidden but not survived until the end of the war because the Nazis discovered them and killed. In many cases those who condemned the rescuers were their neighbours so most of them lived in constant terror of being disclosed. Those who hid the Jews were arrested and often perished in prison camps. There are at least known names of 50 repressed rescuers, from whom 13 have died during the arrest. The fate of 27 rescuers is not exactly known, except that they did not return from prison camps, but another 10 survived the imprisonment and returned. (Vestermanis, n.d.).

“As soon as the memorial complex, museum and institute of the Holocaust Yad Vashem was established in Jerusalem in 1945, it immediately started to collect information about the rescuers of the Jews. In 1953 the Knesset of Israel established a special institution that researched rescue activities and awarded rescuers an honorary diploma and the title “Righteous among the Nations”. Rescuers were also given the right to plant a memorial tree in “The Avenue of Rescuers” in Jerusalem. In 1989 the award had already been given to 8000 people, and by the early 21st century to around 10,000 people. 65 inhabitants of Latvia were also awarded. “ (Vestermanis, n.d.). Reasons why there are so few Latvian people awarded is discussed in the chapter about the Jewish situation in Soviet Latvia.

There were different people who showed mercy to the persecuted Jews, among them also intelligence and well known people. Some of them who tried to support their Jewish acquaintances were the well known Latvian writer Zenta Maurina and artist Vidvuds Eglitis. Among them who not only tried to support but also hid them were professor of architecture, academic Arturs Krumins’s family, politician and “Rigische Rundschau” former editor Paul Schiemann, actor’s Janis Oss family, Latvian officer Edgars Ozols with his wife, teacher Emilija Ozola, athlete and participator in the Olympic games Arturs Motmillers, Riga Christ King’s church priest Kazimirs Vilnis. Church was also involved in some help activities, more active were orthodox and catholic priests, especially in region Latgale. The Lutheran priest from Riga, Gustavs Saurums, tried to give some support to the Jews. There are many evidences that priests tried to save people, either by issuing documents for some Jews that they belonged to the Christian church or with baptizing Jewish children. However, even with these good deeds, there were not big chances to save them. (Vestermanis, n.d.).

4.5.1. The Largest Rescue or the Case of the Rescuer Janis (Zanis) Lipke

The most prominent Jewish rescuer was Janis (Zanis) Lipke (1900-1987), who at that time was Riga port docker. He had finished only 3 classes in primary school but could also speak Russian and German. He was a physically fit, righteous and honest man. He was married to Johanna Lipke and had three children. In 1938 they hired a small house in Kipsala, Maza Balasta iela, which became a shelter for many of fugitives.

When the Nazis arrived in Riga, Lipke found a work in “Luftwafee” storages, places in Riga Central Market area, also close to the Riga ghetto. Gradually, he managed to involve around 30 Jewish men from ghetto and his Latvian friends. After the mass murder in early winter 1941, Lipke offered some ghetto inhabitants to escape. With a help from friends he managed to transport groups of the Jews to safer hiding places in Riga, like in some storage rooms or at different friends’ homes. Later they dug a bunker in his backyard under a shed where not only the Jews found a safe haven, but also the Soviet Secret Service worker and the Latvian men who deserted from the legion. During the period from 1942 to 1944 there constantly stayed 8-12 people.

When the ghetto was shut down, Lipke and friends succeeded to find and transport some Jews from concentration camp “Kaiserwald” and its satellite camps “HKP”, “Lenta”, “Balastdamm”, “Strasdenhof”. He obtained some contacts with farmers from Dobeles whom he asked to fix up a hiding place and first two Jews went there in May, 1943. Lipke got to know also the mayor of Dobeles district who showed interest in rescue as well and helped them to organize hideouts in some more farms. They hid 28 or 36 Jews in Dobeles. (Anders, 2010:154, Biedrība “Žaņa Lipkes memoriāls”, 2008). Together with 29 helpers they saved 55 or 56 Jews.

Vestermanis states his opinion about the courageous rescuer this way: “Janis is sometimes called the “Wallenberg of Latvia”. The comparison to the world-renowned organiser of the rescue missions of the Budapest Jews is flattering, but inaccurate. Raoul Wallenberg, whose name now heads international organisations and foundations, was protected by his official status as a Swedish diplomat. He was also the representative of the US Presidential Committee for Refugees. He had considerable financial resources available to him and contacts in the international financial arena. Lipke, on the other hand, was totally unprotected. He had neither special status, nor resources, apart from a great desire to save people, and the big talent of an organiser. He knew how to assemble people whose help made his large-scale rescuing operations possible. The drivers Jānis Briedis and Kārlis Jankovskis, the workers Edgars Zande and Andrejs Graubiņš, and leather craftsman Bernets Rozenbergs were his closest assistants in Riga. More helpers were needed to arrange several secret shelters in the

countryside, in the Dobele pagasts. Lipke managed to secure the help of Vilis Binenfelds, elder of the Dobele pagasts, Edgars Francmanis, chief doctor of the Dobele Hospital, and farmers of several farmsteads, who included Fricis Rozentāls and his sons Bruno and Edgars, Vilhelmīne Putriņa, Marija Kellers and her sons, Žanis Millers and his sisters Elza and Lidija, Fricis Rozentāls, brother Žanis, Kārlis Didrihsons, Jānis Undulis and several others.” (Vestermanis, n.d.)

Lipke has received the honorary title “Righteous among Nations” and his name has become known worldwide. When he was allowed to visit son in Australia in 1977, there was a special plane sent after him to bring him to Jerusalem where he was greeted and he planted a tree in the Garden of Righteous and his and his wife’s names are inscribed in the Wall of Honour. (Zilbermans, 2005:24)

4.5.2. Jewish Rescue in Liepaja

In 1939 the Jews composed 13% or around 6500 of the population in Liepaja. When the Nazi troops occupied the city in 29th June, 1941 they were followed by *Einsatzkommando Ia* which recruited also Latvian volunteers. During the first days dozens of communists and the Jews were arrested and soon shot. On 5th July anti-Jewish rules were announced which forbade the Jews to attend the public places, to use public transport, as well as they were ordered to stay at home and turn in all the radio transmitters, means of transportation, weapons etc. They had the obligation to mark their clothes with yellow star and their shops with recognizable marks as well. Thus, many Jews were spotted on the streets and taken away by the Nazis for killing in the dunes. The mass murder began in early July and culminated in 22-25th July, when 1100 men were killed. (Anders, 2010:48, 52).

Edward Anders described how he with his brothers were rounded up together with other remaining Jewish families in Liepaja on 15th December, 1941 and brought to the women’s prison yard for later executions in former Latvian army target range Skede, 11km away from Liepaja. His mother earlier had persuaded the authorities that she was not an authentic Jew but was a German adopted by a Jewish family and got the passports for Edward and brothers as half-Jews. This was risky enough as there were many people who knew them as Jews but luckily they did not bear an ill will. There was another coincidence which saved their lives - their father had quit the Jewish religious community several years ago. The secret guidelines classified also half-Jews as Jews if they belonged to the Jewish religious community. With persuading a Nazi officer that they were not the Jews, they were lucky enough to get released from the arrest while many others were deemed to be killed.

His father, unfortunately, was killed already on 9th December after he was discovered in his hiding-place at the family apartment behind a woodpile. Before that, thanks to a Latvian friend Herta Karklins, who found him a work place in a remote farm, he hoped to get some protection there. But after the harvest in October, father had to return home because farmer had no longer use of him. After difficult weeks in the hideout and several rummages by SS men, eventually neighbours had heard his voice behind the walls and had informed the police so he was taken on 2nd December. (Anders, 2010:52-53).

In addition, he mentions some other prisoners who escaped from the yard thanks to a German Navy Administrative Inspector Friedrich Kroll. He was in charge of the Navy's Uniform warehouse in the former cork factory where 100 Jews worked. Realizing that many of his workers had been arrested, he rushed off to prison with 2 of his helpers and got an SS-man to announce that anyone working in the cork factory should get back to work. Even few Jews who did not work there had the presence of mind to join the group and then quietly drift away once they were on the street. Kroll urged his workers not to return home but sleep in the cork factory. Actually, he repeated his visit to prison and saved some more Jews.

Edward Anders nominated Friedrich Kroll to Yad Vashem for the recognition as "Righteous Among the Nations" in 2003, but although he had 4 testimonies of survivors and written diary of the holocaust survivor Kalman Linkimer, Yad Vashem turned it down. Their standards for the German military are very stringent, requiring a proof of great personal risk. However, Kroll's fellow officer Dr. Lancelle, who merely called the Jewish killings a "murder" was court-martialed, demoted to private and assigned to combat duty in a penal unit. But also this did not convince Yad Vashem that Kroll had personal danger when helping the Jews. (Anders, 2010:4-5).

However, if they were fortunate to leave the prison yard and save themselves, then another 2350 (or 2749 as indicated in SS-*Obersturmbannfuhrer* Dr. Fritz Dietrich's diary) Jews during the days of 15-17th December were taken to Skede dunes and executed. By the end of the year there were left 1050 of the original ~6500 Jews in Liepaja, from whom a half was planned to be handed over to the killing squads and another half would be put into the ghetto. In mid- February another action involving killing of 170 Jews took place in Skede. They were taken during the night on horse-drawn sleds but 16 Jews on one sled overpowered the guards and driver and escaped. Fourteen of them evaded recapturing but only one survived the war. Another shooting happened on Hitler's birthday, 20th April, 1942 when dozens of Jews were shot. (Margolis and Anders, 2008:52). Finally, on 1st July, 1942, when the ghetto was established, 832 entered it. Ghetto in Liepaja existed until 8th October, 1943 when the

inmates were transferred to Riga ghetto. About 200 survived the war. (Anders, 2010:60-61, 73).

4.5.3. The Case of Rescuer Roberts Seduls

One of the most remarkable rescuers in Latvia was the Liepaja janitor and former sailor Roberts Seduls (1906-1945) who together with his wife Johanna (1910-1987) hid the Jews in the cellar of an apartment building in the center of the town from 1943 to 1945. Although the cellar was designated for 4 people, finally it held 11 Jews. All of them survived but tragically Seduls was killed by the Soviet bomb shell 2 months before the end of the war.

One of the Jews, the teacher Kalman Linkimer (1913-1988) had kept a diary from the first day of the war (22.06.1941) but was forced to abandon it in April, 1944 when fled from Paplaka military camp to Seduls' cellar. He resumed the writing on 29th April, 1944 and kept it until 20th February, 1945. He had also noted the escape stories from other Jews who were living in the cellar since October-December 1943 thus giving a rather complete account of the Nazi occupation in Liepaja from the perspective of 11 Jews who faced mortal danger in each of those 1410 days spent in cellar.

Seduls and his wife provided the Jews with food, a radio and 6 handguns. Unlike prisoners in camps who were totally cut off from news, these 11 Jews were able to follow military and political events hour by hour. Like millions of other Europeans they awaited liberation, but with an urgency felt only by people facing imminent death. It was not an easy task for Seduls and his wife to feed 11 people every day and keep this secret from neighbours. There was also a risk that Seduls or his wife would have been taken for the forced work to Germany, thus leaving the Jews helpless but nothing such happened. It was hard to conceal hiding so many fugitives in the city centre so some neighbours might have known about that but did not report to the police. Seduls' family also suffered from inner conflicts as Roberts sent his wife to countryside and started living with another woman. (Margolis and Anders, 2008:48-66, Anders, 2010:154)

Some of the Jews got help from other Latvians before they found the shelter in Seduls' cellar. Riva Zivstone and her 4-year old daughter Ada after the liquidation of Liepaja ghetto were driven together with other Jews to Riga ghetto. After some selections which Riva luckily evaded, she understood that it would not take long before they will kill a mother with small child. She was helped and led out of Riga ghetto by a Latvian policeman, who reported to the guard: "Corporal Avots, with wife and child". She first stayed at Avots' girl friend that was told that Riva was Russian but when she discovered that Ada spoke only Yiddish, they had to leave. Riva was hid by several other people but then returned to Liepaja, where she was

helped by doctor Zanderbergs who cured her and a widow Otilija Simelpfenigs, who agreed to keep little Ada, who was too young for hiding for several months or years in the cellar. Although Ada did not speak a word in Latvian, Otilija somehow convinced everybody that she was a relative from the countryside. Then Riva went into Sedus' bunker and survived the war. (Anders, 2010:154-155).

4.5.4. Case of the Rescuer Professor Arturs Krumins

Writer Uldis Lasmanis in early 1990s worked on quite different research when he heard about professor Krumins' family who rescued two Jews during the Holocaust. He had the initiative to find these people and finally after many efforts he met Ilga Krumina, daughter of Arturs Krumins who revealed the story about how they rescued Dr. Oskars Preiss and his son Bernhards Preiss.

Krumins family lived in the very center of Riga, main corner of Berga Bazars, crossing of Marijas and Elizabetes street. Professor Arturs Krumins was a respectable old lecturer at University of Latvia, and he had wife Erna and two daughters. According to the daughter's Ilga Krumina statement in the questionnaire for museum "Jews in Latvia", they hid two Jewish men from winter 1941 until 13th October, 1944.

She states that before the dreadful days of the Jew hunt in Riga, they did not know Preiss' family too well. Her mother met Mrs Preiss in Italian language courses before the war. Dr Preiss as a doctor visited their domestic servant, when she was ill. However, professor Krumins already before helped the young Bernhards Preiss who was captured and tortured by radical nationalist group "Perkonkrusts". Preiss' family called for help as professor Krumins was a respectable citizen and his opinion might make the right impression. This time he succeeded to persuade the competent institutions that Bernhards was an excellent student and his father a selfless doctor and the boy was released.

Later seeing the atrocities done to Jews in Riga, wife of professor Krumins could not withstand that and suggested to hide the Preiss' family. All of the family agreed and they created a hiding place in one corner of room, there was a heavy wardrobe from end to end of the room, and behind that there was a narrow space which could be entered from another room, but the door could be locked, so in case if there was a ransacking, then the Jews could hide there. They also warned the domestic servant, Karline Pilsroze, not to tell anybody but also she felt pity for the Jewish unfortunate fate.

Mrs Krumins with one daughter who lived separately went to the place where the Jewish men were working and whispered to Dr Preiss to come to their apartment where they

would hide them. In some days, Ilga Krumina received a letter from Bernhards, who wanted to make sure that they understood right, where he wrote in a name of a “girl friend”: “Dear Ilga, could me and my father eat lunch and dinner at your place for a while? We are very busy and we don’t have any time to cook.” The next day, Ilga went to the place where they worked and nodded approvingly.

The following day they came, first the father and then the son, as they were scared to flee together. From that day they started to live in the Ilga’s room and got along with the family quite well. The problem was feeding two extra people, the ration cards allowed to buy a very small limit of food, but the prisoners didn’t have them at all. They started bartering the jewellery and got some food from countryside. It helped to survive until the end of the war when they finally went out of the apartment as free people. Ilga said that she had never felt so happy as in the moment when she and her family watched from the window how the “birds from the cage” could flew free as all the other people on the streets.

In 1993 Ilga Krumina received diploma and token medal of Republic of Latvia for selflessness in rescuing victims of the fascist regime. (Humanitas Magna:Nr. III/829b, Ebreja glābēja anketa III/829d)

4.5.6. Difficulties in Rescuing Jews in Latvia

Few Latvians were willing and ready to take the huge burden of hiding and feeding a Jew. There was a threat of being arrested and sent to concentration camps or killed, often with the entire family, especially, if the hidden Jews had weapons. In contrast to several other countries there was small resistance movement in Latvia, and even in other countries the Jews were not welcome, especially, if they had no weapons. Most often the rescuers asked to be paid for their services, as they knew that the Jews had gold and jewellery. (Anders, 2010:65)

There were slight chances to obtain a new identity in a country where police had been keeping records of every citizen. It should acquire not only Latvian looks and fluent language, as well as good friends who knew where and how to obtain false documents and settle the person in another city where he or she would be not known. In any case it would be much harder for the Jewish men as they were circumcised and eventually would be drafted and seen naked by military doctor or fellow soldiers. Also trying to make up stories about the Aryan origin was not working for long, as the SD had become very distrustful in these stories after a while.

Fleeing to Sweden, as the Norwegian Jews did, did not work in the case of Latvia. For example, in Liepaja, from where to Gotland was only 140 km, fishermen could not carry the

refugees across because fuel was rationed, the coast was tightly patrolled and the boats lengthy absence would rouse suspicions. There were hardly any who could escape this way. There was an episode in Linkimer's diary where he mentions two people who had paid a fisherman for a trip but when they arrived in the appointed place, SD was waiting for them. (Anders, 2010:67). Also Janis (Zanis) Lipke had in mind a venture with buying a yacht and taking 15-20 people to neutral Sweden. When he purchased a yacht and wanted to try it out for the first time together with some Jews, suddenly the Nazi police arrived. Lipke himself slipped away but one Jewish man was arrested. Thereby there was a huge risk that by tormenting the Jew police would get information about all the secret hiding places which Lipke had established. This Jewish man acted manfully and did not reveal the secret and finally he was killed in spite of all Lipke's endeavours to save him from the arrest. (Zilbermans, 2005:12).

Another problem was the risk that neighbours or acquaintances would report to the police, even if they did not see the fugitives but merely noticed uncommon behaviour of the rescuers, for example, if they noticed that they regularly bought a lot of food or cooked for more than family members. Edward Anders calls them informers or "murderous anti-semites" who were neighbours, grocers or someone who could notice uncommon activities, fanatical enough to betray a fellow Latvian who sheltered the Jews. He also tried to calculate the percentage of the "murderous anti-semites" during the war but the result as if 5% of population could have been potential informers seemed too high even for himself as the accuracy of using rough calculation and statistics in this case is very questionable. (Anders, 2010:162-163).

However, there were some cases when several people sheltered the Jews, sometimes being complete strangers and police never heard of them. The most impressive was the Janis (Zanis) Lipke network where he recruited 29 helpers, very few were his close friends, and some, especially in Dobeles, where he hid most of the Jews, were complete strangers. Yet none of them betrayed him. Also Israel Alite and Abram Fleischmann in Liepaja stayed in different people's homes but were never caught. The rescuers knew at least the previous and the next host but in each new place there was risk of being betrayed by neighbours. There have been several Jews who had been hosted in multiple places, like Eva Hoff (5 hosts), Serafima Parasa (4), Riva Schafer (6), Valentina Freimane (7), Frida Michelsons (5), Haim Leibovitsch (4), Alite and Fleischmann (7). (Anders, 2010:163).

4.5.7. Unfortunate Rescues

The Case of Jews in Aizpute

There were many tragic situations when people who tried to save the Jews were discovered or betrayed by neighbours to the police that resulted both in deaths of the Jews as well as rescuers. One of such cases was the unfortunate rescue, which happened in Aizpute that ended with deaths of 4 Jews and 6 rescuers.

Aizpute is a small town, 42 km away from Liepaja. A clerk in a police station, Zanis Pukis (1910-1944) in September 1943 overheard a remark that the Jews working in the peat factory will be “sent away”. His brother, Karlis Pukis (1919-1944) who worked in the same factory as tailor, warned two fellow Jews. Both Pukis brothers with help of a neighbour Gerhards Susters (1914-1944) set up a temporary hideout in the attic of the old Aizpute castle where several families lived, including Ieva Dzene (1892-1944), the mother of both brothers’ wives. Four Jews, Yossel Getz, Isaac Heifetz, Shlomo Uzdin and Leib Uzdin (Uzdin brothers were from Lithuania, others from Riga) were hiding in the attic where the rescuers had even installed electricity wires.

Brothers Puki and Gerhards Susters dug a bunker behind the Susters house with 4 sleeping places, camouflage entrance and emergency exit. The Jews did the sewing jobs for farmers, from whom Susters received food but this was not enough. The factory director V. Kobilko suggested Pukis brothers to take some potatoes which were stored in the old castle. But someone living there noticed the removal of potatoes and reported the police. The police found out also the installed electricity wires in the attic. Apparently tipped off by the informer, the police arrived to Susters house and arrested Gerhards as well as his father Janis (1880-1944). They did not find the bunker though. The next day they arrested the Pukis brothers and their wives Elza (1920) and Anna (1916) and their mother Ieva Dzene.

After the police had left, the Jews fled to the peat bog, taking along a sawed-off military rifle that Anna had given them. She had obtained it from a deserted legion soldier Krumins, whom Anna was hiding. A day or two later the Jews one after another shot themselves with the rifle when heard the shots nearby and thought that the police had tracked them down. Actually, policemen were merely hunting in the peat bog.

The rescuers were taken to Liepaja prison. Anna, being pregnant, was released shortly afterwards. Gerhards was imprisoned for 9 months but later shot dead in Skede. The remaining 5 prisoners were transported to Stutthof on 10 October, 1944. Ieva died in the arms of her daughter Elza on Christmas night, brothers and father Puki did not return from the camp either. Only Elza survived. She was liberated by the Red Army in March. Only 3

prisoners were still alive from the group of prisoners who were hastened out from Stutthof together with withdrawing Nazis.

When a teacher from Aizpute, Ilmars Steinbergs, collected and wrote this material for the museum “Jews in Latvia”, he asked Elza Puke, whether she understood the risk of sheltering fugitive Jews. She replied: “We understood this quite well, but these people needed to be rescued”. (Anders, 2010:156-158, Ilmāra Šteinberga liecība par Aizputes glābējiem, III/785:5).

Misfortunes of Rescuer Janis (Zanis) Lipke

In addition to the unsuccessful attempt to sail with a yacht to Sweden, the man who rescued the biggest number of the Jews, did not manage to save everybody during his endeavours. A big misfortune befell on a small group of Jews who were hidden in Andrejs Graubins place in Avotu Street 75 in Riga, who were discovered in a Nazi made inspection. The Jews did not want to surrender and opened fire to the policemen. However, in the unequal fight, they all were killed. Graubins was arrested and tortured, and later sent to a concentration camp in Germany where he died. (Zilbermans, 2005:13-15).

It did not always happen that everyone who got in touch with Lipke, could have been saved. For example, an Austrian mountain engineer was shot dead while he was striving to cut the barbed wire in the Riga ghetto. The bullets hissed over the head of Lipke, who was waiting on the other side of the fence but he was not hit. He also could not convince the prominent professor, doctor Vladimir Mincs to run, because doctor could not leave the ghetto inhabitants without his help. He was later taken to Buchenwald where he passed away. Janis (Zanis) Lipke was particularly shocked when he got to know that a war hospital dentist, whose colleague Lipke had rescued, was shot. Lipke actually had a plan how to rescue all 18 Jewish doctors from the hospital, but only once had the courage to follow him – Harijs Noims. (Zilbermans, 2005:18-19).

In several cases the Jews doubted the chances of survival if they ran together with Lipke. Many asked, how big is the percent of a fortunate outcome. Lipke could not give any guarantees – it was war. Many people did not dare accept his good will, being scared of this adventure. Later, unfortunately, they lost their lives due to their precaution. However, nobody could really project which alternative would had been safer, every option had its big risks, also Lipkes rescue plans. But he emotionally suffered about each victim he could not save, also later he recalled the episodes that he had witnessed standing outside the ghetto fence when the Jewish killing actions were started and he could not help the terrified people.

One of the most tragic misfortunes happened to the Jews in the end of the war. In July, 1944 when the Red army advanced and reached Jelgava and Dobele, the 14 Jews who were hidden in the farm “Mezamaki” in Dobele district rejoiced. On the day when they saw the Soviet soldiers in “Mezamaki” they happily left their cover, not knowing that the front zone was very close and very unstable. The next day, when some of them sat in the yard, a dozen of the Nazi soldiers appeared out of nowhere. They killed 3 Jews on the spot, and another one later was captured and shot in Dobele. The rest of them managed to hide but this was an overwhelming grief for everybody involved in rescue. (Zilbermans, 2005:43-46).

4.6. The Post-war Situation in Latvia

After the war when Latvia was reoccupied by the Soviet Union, the Jews started to return from the evacuation in the USSR. Around 5000 Jews were at war with the Nazis in the Soviet Army, 2000 perished. There are estimates that around thousand Jews from Latvia survived the Holocaust both in the Nazi occupied territories and concentration camps. Later returned those Jews who had been repressed and deported in 1941. It is estimated that around 14 000 Jews who had been citizens of Latvia or their ancestors came back in the post-war period. The return was filled with grief and suffering, as whole families had been killed. Many victims married to have somebody to share the pain. Many survivors tried to repatriate to Israel to participate in rebuilding of their national state. Around 400 of them succeeded to do it until 1946 when the organizers from Zionist group “Hashomir Hacair” were arrested by the Soviet authorities as none of the Jews had the official permission to leave. (Dribins, 2002:97-104, Sneidera, 2009:215, 229).

Starting from 1945 many Jews from other regions of USSR arrived. Some fled from the hunger, some from growing anti-semitism rising from Stalin’s course to restore Russian chauvinism in a Bolshevik pattern. Some were sent to the Baltic region to rebuild the countries. In 1959 there were 36,6 thousand Jews in the Latvia SSR. However, although among the Latvians the attitude was more tolerant, overall discrimination from the Soviet authorities escalated. The Jews were pressed out from the administrative apparatus, they were prohibited of renewing their community, to maintain their ethnocultural and religious identity. It was forbidden to reopen Jewish schools, so children basically had to attend Russian schools. Jewish cultural activities were not allowed as well, as it could lead to appearance of “bourgeois nationalist breeding-grounds”. (Dribins, 2002:97-104).

There were the Jews who were arrested, for example, in 1949 as KGB tried to prove that information gathering and research about Yiddish language and culture is very dangerous ideological type of sabotage. In 1950s more repressions towards Zionistic activities appeared,

many were imprisoned. After an order from Moscow, inspection of hospitals resulted in firing Jews from their positions based on conspiracy what “doctors saboteurs” had anti-Stalinist motives for destroying the regime. There were also some Jewish expulsions from the communist party but not massive. In 1953, after the death of Stalin, the repressions towards the Jews were stopped, the prisoners were released. However, the surveillance of the Jewish intelligence continued. (Dribins, 2002:97-104, Sneidere, 2009:221, 236).

The absurd anti-semitic propaganda attempts certainly left some impact on the people and the public opinion in the time of Stalin was having anti-semitic traits. There were also repressions towards the Jews. If in the West, principle “innocent until proven guilty” was valid, then in the Soviet Union a different principle prevailed: “guilty if the state says so”. There were many Jews liberated from the concentration camps that NKVD sent to the Gulag on the assumption that any Jew who survived must have spied for, collaborated with, or bribed the Nazis. The formal charges were “Treason Against Homeland”, or when it was untenable – “Socially Dangerous Element”. (Anders, 2010:178).

The Jews were repressed on different basis: those who wanted to illegally emigrate from the USSR; those who were suspected to have dubious relationship with the Nazi officers, collaboration with “fascistic Germany’s occupation authorities” while they were imprisoned in ghetto; the Jewish intellectuals who lived in Latvia until 1940 and wanted to renew the Jewish cultural life and public organizations; the Jews who actively participated in renewal of the Jewish religious community. Against all of these “criminals” political legal procedures were set out and many were arrested or sent to corrective labour camps. (Sneidere, 2009:239).

The Jewish awakening underground movement grew stronger as the Russification and anti-zionistic propaganda grew stronger. The emergency to go to Israel increased and 13 153 Jews left Latvia during the period 1968 – 1980 after serious struggle with the Soviet institutions. (Dribins, 2002:97-104).

When it regards rewarding the Jewish rescuers, then the number of the Latvians who were awarded with the title of „The Righteous Among the Nations” was rather small until the end of the Soviet regime. The explanation lies in the fact that Soviet authorities treated the rescued Jews with mistrust and frequently they were repressed, so it was risky to keep contacts with Israel to inform also about the rescuers. Also for the people who rescued the Jews, the honorary title would only cause trouble during the Soviet period, so the exploration of the Jewish rescue started quite late. (Vestermanis, n.d)

4.7. The Post-war Research and Publications about Jewish Situation in Latvia during World War II

The Soviet authorities placed obstacles for commemoration of the Holocaust victims, calling such events as singling out one nation's suffering that offends other nations and countries that suffered under the Nazi occupation. (Dribins, 2002:101).

The Latvian attitudes towards the Jews during the World War II was not studied during the Second Soviet Occupation, as the regime denied a specifically Jewish Holocaust, accused survivors of spying for the Nazis, and accused rescuers of sheltering Jews only for money. It was started basically five decades later, and much of it was done by Margers Vestermanis, a historian and the director of the museum "Jews in Latvia". (Anders, 2010:67).

Vestermanis states that Holocaust historiography has started to develop in Latvia after regaining the independence. The Soviet occupation period was very unfriendly to the Holocaust research as it was included in the forbidden topics. Therefore, an important distinction is a chapter in Edgars Blumfelds's work "Latvian nation's fight in the Great Patriotic War", published in 1966, there he dared describe the Jewish tragedy in the Nazi occupied Latvia.

Also the Latvian historians in exile did not chose to research this topic until professor at Ithaca University, Andrievs Ezergailis finally opened this topic in a conference in 1986. His writing style has been called provocative but also he was daring to start discussion which other historians did not undertake to raise. (Neiburgs, 2005). The most prominent work about the Holocaust in Latvia is his monograph "Holocaust in German occupied Latvia", published in 1999.

Until 1980s the concealed Jewish tragedy attained only some reflections in the Latvian prose. Exceptionally, KGB published some propaganda brochures about political refugees and Latvian SS collaborators, mainly meant to compromise the Western countries, which had sheltered the Latvian refugees. These publications were typical Cold war compositions without critical historical perspective.

The first who started to write about the Holocaust immediately after the war, were the Jews themselves. Survivors created a wide range of memoir literature which provides important informative field for the next generations. However, all the early memories were not published in the territory of the Soviet Union. Even Elmars Rivoss's memoirs could only published after his death in the "perestroika" period in 1987, and even then with corrections from the publishing house in Moscow. In total survivors had published 18 memoir books, most known are Kaufmann's and Press's writings. The foreign Jews who were deported to

Riga have devoted five books to their recollections from Riga ghetto period. (Vestermanis, 2000).

Serious basis of the history of anti-semitism and the Jewish history in Latvia was created by professor Leo Dribins. Much about the Nazi occupation and the Jewish persecutions nowadays is written by historian Aivars Stranga. Lately, also an important critical research has been done by Edward Anders. Much information has been collected in the museum “Jews in Latvia” since its creation in 1989.

CONCLUSIONS

Latvia and Norway found themselves in rather different situations during the World War II. Although both became occupied by Hitler, it happened in different ways under different circumstances. Also aims of the occupational power were not the same in the Baltic States and Scandinavia.

- Norway was occupied approximately a year earlier than Latvia, respectively the German troops entered the country on 8th May, 1940 but the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union started on 22nd June, 1941, they entered Riga on 1st July, but the rest of the territory of Latvia was occupied on 8th July, 1941.
- Norway was ruled by Reich Commissariat of Norway in cooperation with pro-Nazi puppet government lead by Vidkun Quisling, while the legitimate Norwegian King and government went in exile in London. Latvia was a part of Reich Commissariat Ostland, governed by Hinrich Lohse, not having any local governmental authorities. In the Nazi perspective the Norwegians were regarded as a part of the Aryan “master race”, thus were not supposed to be a subject of racial persecutions. However, the territories of occupied Eastern Europe were planned to be cleansed to create *Lebensraum* (living space) for the superior Third Reich inhabitants. The Latvians in the racist hierarchy were valued somewhere between the Aryans and the Slavs. The Nazis planned to leave the suitable Latvians for Germanization but the rest would have been deported to interior of Russia.
- The Jewish population in Latvia was rather large, in 1935 when the last census was carried out, it showed 95 000 Jews. Upon the arrival of the Nazis, there might have been around 67 000 in Latvia. The Jewish history in Latvia is dated back already from 16th-17th century. In Norway, quite opposite, the Jews were prohibited to settle there until 1851 due to restrictions in the constitution. Only when this clause was amended, the Jews from Germany and Denmark and later also from Eastern Europe started to arrive. The Jewish history in Norway is limited to around three - four generations before the Holocaust started what meant also weaker ties and integration into the local society. When the Nazis attacked and occupied Norway there were only around 2100 Jews residing there. In fact among all the countries, which the Nazi Germany occupied during the first three years of the war, Norway was the one with the smallest Jewish population.
- In Latvia the anti-Jewish orders were issued in the beginning of July, prohibiting them from being on the streets between 18:00 and 7:00, walking on the sidewalks, standing

in queues at the grocery stores (basically, they could not buy food because there always were queues), using public transport and being in public places. They were also forced to wear the yellow star to make them identified. Later in the when ghettos in the biggest Latvian cities (Riga, Daugavpils, Liepaja) were created, the Jews were forced in there. In Norway, although it was occupied a year longer than Latvia, the Jews did not face so radical measures against them immediately. Obviously, some had been arrested and deported as political prisoners in the early months of occupation, but only in May 1941, due to the attack on the Soviet Union more restrictions were realized like confiscations of all radios and later the mandatory Jewish registration was enforced where their passports were stamped with red “J”. However, starting from November, 1941 the Jewish businesses were seized in 3 counties and more single arrests happened. There were also concentration camps in Norway, where the arrested Jews and political prisoners were kept under brutal and humiliating conditions forced to do inhuman work already from the 1940.

- The first Jews of Latvia were killed already on 23rd June, 1941, immediately after the first Nazis entered the Western part of Latvia. The extermination of the Latvian Jews was carried out in two main stages – shootings from July to October 1941, commanded by Stahlecker, and from November to December, 1941, organized by Jeckeln. During the first period, around 30 000 were killed, but in the second phase 25 000 Jews were murdered during two days. In Norway, individual killings of the Jews were rare. Main arrests of the Jews began first on 26th October, 1942 when all males were taken and their property confiscated. One month later, on 26th November, all Jewish women and children were arrested and together with the previously arrested men were taken directly to Oslo where a cargo ship waited for them to transport them to death camps in Germany and Poland. By 27th November, all Norwegian Jews were either deported, imprisoned or murdered, except those who had fled to Sweden or those few who were hiding in Norway.
- The Jewish rescue was rather different when comparing both of the countries. Firstly, the Norwegian Jews had an escape option to the neutral Sweden because Norway has a long land border with it. First of all, the problem was that many Jews were optimistic about the future even if they had heard something about the Nazi atrocities in Germany and Austria, many believed that the occupation will not last and hoped that the Allies would soon take over. Also the first year of the occupation was rather calm without serious assaults and violence against them, except the hatred propaganda in the press and separate excesses. Most of them understood the danger only after the

first serious arrests and then started to evacuate hastily. What helped many Jews was that there were people not only with warm hearts but also with good connections with the resistance movement, which was quite strong in Norway. The resistance movement not only realized sabotages against the Nazis but also organized secret escape routes for the Norwegians and also Jews. Before the first actions against the Jews, there were some people from the police who warned the Jewish friends who then had one night to find as many Jews as they could and hide or at least warn them. Basically, the policemen themselves were informed only the evening before the actions so rescuers had very little time to warn and take out of the houses those Jews who they knew. For a while the kindhearted Norwegians hid the Jews at home but it was a rather short time because they had to get them over to Sweden as fast as possible. So called "Sweden's traffic" were secret routes where guides from resistance movement took small groups of people over the Swedish border. This was a challenge not only for the resistance men to go unnoticed but also for the Jews themselves. They were usually not used for long, very craving walks through woods and over mountains. The routes had limited capacity and it was difficult to transport varied Jewish groups, including people from all ages, carrying baggage with them while walking many kilometers in very hilly and demanding terrain. The help organizations were simply not suited for the situation when very different and very many people needed to get over the border quickly, including the consideration for security for the whole rescue mechanism. There were some courageous people who took care to evacuate the whole Jewish orphanage in Oslo during the night before mass arrests. The same people rescued also Jewish children from the Nazi occupied Austria and Czechoslovakia before the war. Altogether, the Norwegians succeeded to rescue 1300-1400 Jews that was around a half of the whole Jewish population. Approximately 760 Norwegian Jews perished in the World War II under the Nazi regime.

- In Latvia the Jewish rescue situation was different. There were no neutral neighbouring countries behind the border as Norway had. When the Nazi attack started the only escape was eastwards to interior of Russia. Possible as many as 20 000 Jews were able to escape but many were either not allowed to cross the border as the Soviets were suspicious of the Nazi saboteurs and spies infiltrated among the refugees or they were too late and were captured by the Nazi troops who cut the way to the Soviet Union. Around 67 000 Jews were trapped in the territory of Latvia from whom around 400-500 were rescued by local people. To estimate the number of those who survived the war is difficult as they were dispersed among different concentration

camps but some historians claim that it was at least 1000. The rescuers were people with various backgrounds and different occupations, peasants, regular workers, intellectuals, who took upon themselves the task to hide and feed one or several Jews not only for a couple of days but for months and years. Many, of course, got scared and sent the Jews away after the first day but there were around 400-450 rescuers and their family members who endured this task. Not all the Jews and their rescuers survived because sometimes the Nazis discovered their shelter and not only killed the Jews but often also their rescuers, especially if the Jews had weapons. In most of such cases, the neighbours or other people who could hear or notice something, were the ones who reported to the police. There were different methods of hiding the Jews in the cities and countryside. In the countryside very often a bunker or a cellar was dug under the house or barn where the Jews could spend the daytime and come out during the nights. In summertime they sometimes hid in woods, the haystacks, barns, bathhouses or whatever hideout could be found or arranged. The farmers often could not feed so many extra people so most often the Jews gave them money or jewelry or any other valuables they had. The feeding was even harder in the cities and towns, as everybody lived on limited ration cards but the Jews did not even have them, so rescuers often struggled with provisions. It was also dangerous to show that they bought more food than it was necessary for their families because there was a risk to be reported to the police. Those who hid in the cities either were placed in uninhabited areas like cellars, attics, storage rooms or there was some kind of hideout arranged in the apartment where the fugitive could hide from sudden police searches. However, many of them often had to change the location as it became too dangerous to hide in one place. It was hard to have a Jew at home and make everybody to believe that he or she was a relative from the countryside so very rarely Jews came to sight to others than the rescuers. On the other hand, the Jewish children who were too small to hide together with adults and keep silent were often given to some warmhearted ladies or families who would take care of them while the parents tried to find hideouts for themselves. Most of the times, the Jews were hid alone but there were several people who had the courage to take upon themselves the risk to shelter a Jewish family or multiple Jewish refugees. The most prominent rescuer was Janis (Zanis) Lipke who together with his family and friends rescued around 55 Jews. Not always the Jews and rescuers knew each other, help was often given spontaneously. Actually, the Jews often were rejected by them who they thought to be their friends but found shelter at totally unknown people's homes.

What regards the future studies, more in depth studies in this field should be carried out, especially in the post-Soviet countries where during the Soviet occupation period research about the Holocaust as particularly the Jewish tragedy was forbidden and the same regarded the issue of the Jewish helpers. Many Jews have passed away with the secret of their brave rescuers, as well as many rescuers have not spoken out loud about their acts of heroism so the task for the historians now has become more complicated. If the people who are primary sources of memory are still alive, it is important to obtain as much information as possible through in depth interviews, for example. This will be useful for future researches and for the transfer of important memories to the next generations.

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