

Yad Vashem Studies

Special Issue

The Holocaust in its European Context, 1942–1944



Yad Vashem Studies is planning a special theme issue for spring 2012 (vol. 40:1) on The Holocaust in its European Context, 1942–1944.

As we approach the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, we find that some of the fundamental questions about the Holocaust in its European context remain open. *Yad Vashem Studies* will seek to contribute to our understanding of the attitudes and policies of governments and various defined groups in Europe to the murder of the Jews. We will focus on the second half of World War II, when the war's ultimate outcome gradually became clear and when the logic of self-interest might be expected to lead in a particular direction regarding their attitudes towards the murder of the Jews. Was that indeed the case, and why?

The basic underlying question that we might ask is why Nazi Germany found so many partners all across Europe, even at a late stage in the war. But many more questions derive from this. What were the motivating factors for governments and other leaders, as well as societies at large in their decisionmaking regarding Nazi policies and Jewish fate? What were the roles of anti-Semitism and national or political interests and the mutual impact of these factors on each other? Why did some decide to hand the Germans their Jews or even kill them, while others halted their murderous activity? For example, why in August-September 1942, just before the battle of Stalingrad, did Ion Antonescu renege on his agreement with the Germans to send the Romanian Jews to Bełżec, whereas in March 1943, after Stalingrad, the Bulgarian regime deported more than 11,000 Jews to Treblinka? If the course of the war played a role in such decision-making, then these decisions seem almost counter-intuitive.

What were the mutual influences of countries in one region on each other's policies towards the Jews? For the independent or semi-independent states, did decisions and actions in one affect the decisions in the other? Did policies and actions in Slovakia, Hungary, and Romania affect each other? Or in Croatia and Hungary? Bulgaria and Romania? And what about the reactions of the occupied peoples of Eastern Europe to Nazi policies and the fate of the Jews? Did the attitudes of Latvians and Lithuanians impact on each other in this period? Or of Poles and Ukrainians? Or, in Western Europe, of French and Dutch officials, or Italian and French?

Would it be correct to say that Jews in borderlands or disputed lands were the easiest for these countries and peoples to dispatch to their deaths? Were European peoples seeking first to get rid of the Jews in these areas as part of laying their claim to the land?

Were there so many co-participants with the Germans across Europe primarily as a result of particular factors in each place, or was the Holocaust in effect a European-wide phenomenon?

Such questions and more remain open, awaiting further research and analysis by scholars, whether on the level of diplomatic and political history, social history, or the social sciences.

We welcome original submissions that examine specific cases as well as those that take a broader view. In either case, we encourage authors to relate to the broader historical context as well.

All submissions must go through our regular peer review process in order to be accepted for publication of course. Submissions for this special theme should be sent to our office in hard copy and in digital format by March 31, 2011 to yv.studies@yadvashem.org.il.

Please prepare the article according to Yad Vashem's [house style](#).

I look forward to reading your submission and to having it considered for publication in *Yad Vashem Studies*.

Sincerely,

Dr. David Silberklang

Editor

Yad Vashem Studies