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The Silent Majority and Illegitimate Structures: An investigation into everyday nationalism during the German Occupation of the Netherlands throughout the Second World War

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The Silent Majority and Illegitimate Structures
An investigation into everyday nationalism during the German Occupation of the Netherlands
throughout the Second World War

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Maurits Hans Benjamin Seijger, December 2021

Chapter 1: Introduction

July 29th 1940, now referred to as the Anjerdag, was an infamous display of public nationalism that took place shortly after the German invasion of the Netherlands. In celebration of Prince Bernhard's birthday, a large portion of the Dutch population was moved to demonstrate their loyalty to the Royal family. This public display of love and loyalty was significantly more prolific than was usual for this particular celebration, leading to the assertion that the intensity of this instance was caused by a desire to publicly display loathing towards the occupiers. Dressing in red, white and blue clothing, hanging out the Dutch flag, placing flowers at monuments to the Royal family, and wearing orange flowers in lapels and button holes were some of the actions of ordinary men and women to show publicly display their loyalties. It is worthy to note that many of these displays were deemed illegal by the occupational state.¹ Subsequently, the question arises as to what motivated Dutch men and women to flock to the streets in open neglect of the mandates of the 'state', and thereby risking their liberty? Loe De Jong has noted that the invasion gave rise to situations like this because of an increased propensity of national togetherness among the Dutch population.² This togetherness can, through examples like this be equated to nationalism, as these demonstrations were manifestations of Dutch, and only Dutch sentiment.

Nevertheless, it is not enough to classify the motivations of the Dutch peoples demonstrative actions as nationalistic. There is value in studying the underlying dynamics that construct these motivations. Moreover, this example serves to show that nationalism was of high motivating capacity during this one day, but the occupation lasted close to half a decade. The motivating capacity of nationalism should be seen as fluctuating, and we must therefore address its intensity in ordinary daily life throughout the occupation. Ordinary daily life was, and still is, consistently different between nation-states, with different cultural and social factors impacting the course of ordinary actions. However, nationalism is rarely attached to these instances as an explanatory concept. Rather, nationalism is frequently assigned as a motivational explanation for conduct that can be considered irrational and detrimental to the personal safety of a group or individual. However, if nationalism fluctuates between hotter instances like the Anjerdag, and the banal, cold iteration of everyday life, then there must be a

¹ Ad van Liempt, *Leven in bezet Nederland 1940-1945* (Uitgeverij Unieboek | Het Spectrum, 2020), 108.

² Loe De Jong, *Het Koninkrijk Der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog Deel 4 Mei '40 - Maart '41*, vol. 4, *Het Koninkrijk Der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog* (Amsterdam: Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie, 1972), 275.

more noteworthy dynamic at play between nationalism and rational self-preservation that also fluctuates between events of this hotter persuasion. As such, the fluctuation of nationalism as a motivating sentiment in everyday life should be addressed with equal vigor as hotter manifestations like the Anjerdag.

The study of nationalism has been primarily defined by the historical studies that have legitimated it as a valuable historical paradigm in its own right. Take, for example, the paradigmatic texts of Benedict Anderson, Eric Hobsbawm, Terence Ranger, and Ernest Gellner. Nevertheless, the rival schools of research have been defined by the same basic theoretical questions.³ Namely, debate on the origins of the nation-state, how far back the history of nationalism actually stretches, and the role of nations and nationalism in historical and social change, still rages on.⁴ These debates can furthermore be abstracted to the question of how to define the concept of nationalism. This has manifested in several schools of thought with fundamentally differing perceptions. The organicist definition clashes fundamentally with that of the voluntarists, just as the perennialists find themselves at odds with the modernists.⁵ These schools of thought, however, have tended to focus their theoretical approaches on the elite, top-down nationalist impositions of politics and culture, and have thereby attached the agency, in the question of why the nation-state has persisted, firmly to these top-down processes.⁶

Because this theoretical discourse has grown so large and so complex, it has been practically impossible to construct a history of nationalism without participating in a theoretical turf war. Only recently have sub-fields surfaced within nationalism studies, with the intention of moving away from these monolithic grand narratives. Namely, this movement has taken to addressing ‘nationalism from below’, under the assertion that a nation is composed of people, and the nation originates as people become national. This refocusing effort shifts agency to the silent majority of ordinary people, as it is them who, in their masses, produce the nations which nationalism studies address.⁷ This will be the focus of this research, to explore the ways in which nationalism from below can be explored on an empirical basis.

³ Benedict Anderson, “Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism,” in *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (Oxford/New York, 2003); Hobsbawm Hobsbawm E. J. et al., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge University Press, 1992); Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Cornell University Press, 2008).

⁴ Anthony D. Smith, *The Nation in History: Historiographical Debates about Ethnicity and Nationalism* (UPNE, 2000), 2.

⁵ Smith, 2–3.

⁶ Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism*, 2nd ed., Key Concepts (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010), 82–83.

⁷ Smith, 83–84.

Namely, this refocusing act has encountered many methodological pitfalls. Research into the history of nationalism from below looks at the mundane, popular culture, and everyday life displays that reaffirm, reproduce, and perpetuate the nation-state as the dominant structure of human community. Primary source research has thusly been handicapped, because of the heavy focus on identifying intrinsic, subconscious feelings, that ordinary people do not necessarily register, let alone leave physical evidence of. As such, research has tended towards sociological methodologies. Research in the social sciences, however, easily falls into methodological nationalism, where the nation-state is uncritically taken for granted as the primary unit of study.⁸ Methodological nationalism endangers historical research as it views the nation-state as essentially synonymous with society, and thereby conflates the complex dynamics inherent in a community of millions of people into generalized social trends.⁹ While actively avoiding methodological nationalism is imperative, the overall methodological problem that the intrinsic, subconscious nature of nationalism from below presents remains difficult to address.

The influential concept of banal nationalism, introduced by Michael Billig exemplifies the challenge in operationalizing research into the feelings of the constituents of the nation-state, about the nation-state. Billig's methodology looked at national newspapers and their use of deictic definite articles. To clarify, deictic definite articles refer to how linguistic tropes, like 'the weather', 'de politie', and 'der Staat', are only able to signify a clear national subject when the understanding is shared between both writer and reader.¹⁰ As such, the presence of this language denotes a subconscious, banal, affirmation of the nation-state in the readership, as these newspapers were not met with widespread confusions about which geographical region *the weather* referred to. However, despite the innovative methodology Billig's banal nationalism was still illuminating a top-down process as it described ordinary people and their passive understanding of these articles in the national media.¹¹ The institutional nature of national media outlets obscure any analysis beyond the recognition of nationalism from below as present in the readership of the published sources. Nationalism from below aims to return agency to these ordinary people. However, subconscious affirmations like those identified by

⁸ Eric Storm, "A New Dawn in Nationalism Studies? Some Fresh Incentives to Overcome Historiographical Nationalism," *European History Quarterly* 48, no. 1 (n.d.): 116.

⁹ Andreas Wimmer and Nina Glick Schiller, "Methodological Nationalism, the Social Sciences, and the Study of Migration: An Essay in Historical Epistemology <sup/>," *International Migration Review* 37, no. 3 (September 2003): 576, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-7379.2003.tb00151.x>.

¹⁰ Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: Sage Publications Ltd, 1995), chap. 1.

¹¹ Michael Billig, "Reflecting on a Critical Engagement with Banal Nationalism – Reply to Skey," *The Sociological Review (Keele)* 57, no. 2 (2009): 347, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954X.2009.01837.x>.

Billig leave little or no traces for historians to analyze in any depth, as almost every source corpus can be criticized as unrepresentative. How do we solve this evidence problem?

Firstly, we must determine what the underlying causes for this evidence problem actually are. Considering the endemic consideration of the evidence problem in the existing literature, this has not been too hard to determine. Mainly, it is practically impossible to discern an omnipresent subconscious phenomenon that only becomes salient in reaction to some form of stimulus, or breach.¹² This has formed the basis of Jon E. Fox's breaching methodology, which implied looking at the situations in which the subconscious is pushed to the conscious by a breach in accepted, subconscious nationhood.¹³ Fox explains the breaches with which he concerns himself as those actions which upset the commonly accepted, but unspoken and informally defined, decorum of social intercourse.¹⁴ This could be triggered by something as innocuous as, for example, a foreigner requesting a non-customary greeting from a local farmer. But by addressing the upset, the individual's nationalistic sentiment is made salient. However, we cannot rely on records of these types of actions to exist in historical contexts where nationalism is worth studying.

Herein we return to the opening anecdote, and primary historical case study of this thesis, the German occupation of the Netherlands. During this time, the executive authority of the Dutch state was in the hands of the German occupational government. The assumption that this situation would spark nationalist outcry in the Dutch populace is valid. However, it is important to determine which aspects of everyday life changed to insight this reaction. As noted above, the value of studying nationalism should be expanded to understand why ordinary daily life differs between nations. Namely, due to the authority of the occupational government over the structures which contextualized everyday life for Dutch men and women, the nation was in a state of constant breach. It was the very structures of state that stimulated the Dutch population to act with a, hotter, more salient variant of nationalism, as it was these structures which were now under the direct control of the German occupiers. Thus, because the occupation provided the context of the Dutch nation-state during these years, every action that

¹² Maarten Van Ginderachter, "How to Gauge Banal Nationalism and National Indifference in the Past: Proletarian Tweets in Belgium's Belle Époque," *Nations and Nationalism* 24, no. 3 (2018): 579–93, <https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12420>; Jon E. Fox, "The Edges of the Nation: A Research Agenda for Uncovering the Taken-for-Granted Foundations of Everyday Nationhood," *Nations and Nationalism* 23, no. 1 (2017): 26–47, <https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12269>; Jon E. Fox and Maarten Van Ginderachter, "Introduction: Everyday Nationalism's Evidence Problem," *Nations and Nationalism* 24, no. 3 (2018): 546–52, <https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12418>.

¹³ Fox, "The Edges of the Nation," 27.

¹⁴ Fox, 31.

was taken within this context was, at least to some degree, a reaction to this breach in accepted national routine. By studying these actions, and the varying intensity of nationalistic expression in them, we can truly study nationalism from below. Secondly, the question of sentiments displayed by the Dutch population during the occupation has been subjected to significant revision in recent years. The immediate postwar narratives tended to paint a diametric good or bad – “goed” or “fout” – dynamics within the Dutch reaction to the German occupation, implying a loyal/nationalist and treacherous/un-nationalist split between the occupied peoples. However, around the 1980s this narrative began to fall into question, shifting towards a more elaborate dynamic of shades of grey. This shift has equally pulled the sentiment of the occupied peoples into question, as the monolithic anti-German consensus which was taken as standard in the immediate postwar was now being subjected to more critical inquiry.

Scientific Relevance

This case study, nationalism during the German occupation of the Netherlands, has largely been discounted as a functional example of nationalism in the existing literature. The reason being that nationalist expression on the part of the occupied peoples has been considered obvious. As Loe de Jong posits, a sense of augmented togetherness and nationhood erupted out of the invasion. The invasion was perceived as undeniably scandalous, and regardless of problems with the old order of the now exiled government, this government had at least been Dutch.¹⁵ This affirmation of an elevated sense of national solidarity should definitely not be dismissed out of hand. Modern nationalism theories, like that of Roger Brubaker supports the logic that a threat to a category of people - like Dutch people - is capable of explaining increased togetherness between the adherents of that category.¹⁶ Nevertheless De Jong’s national framing of this response should not be accepted uncritically either. De Jong’s work was written with the purpose of creating an official history of the war and occupation in the Netherlands.¹⁷ As such it makes sense that De Jong’s text would frame this togetherness in national terms. Furthermore, because his is not a text written about nationalism, the lack of critical discussion on this assertion, or sources that qualify it, is to be expected. This assertion was likely also experiential, considering the experiences of oral sources, and of course De Jong’s own

¹⁵ De Jong, *Het Koninkrijk Der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog Deel 4 Mei '40 - Maart '41*, 4:275.

¹⁶ Roger Brubaker, “Ethnicity without Groups,” *Sociální Studia* 3, no. 1 (July 1, 2016), <https://doaj.org>.

¹⁷ Bram Mertens, “‘An Explosion of Vitality and Creativity’? Memory and Historiography of the Second World War in Belgium and the Netherlands,” *Dutch Crossing* 37, no. 1 (March 2013): 42, <https://doi.org/10.1179/0309656412Z.00000000024>.

experiences, considering his research's closer proximity to the war. However, the tendency to resign demonstrative actions to the cause of nationalism is symptomatic of presentism, and methodological nationalism, as it takes the nation-state, and nationalism for granted. Mathew A. Kocher, Adria K. Lawrence, and Nuno P. Monteiro noted the endemic quality of this tendency when they noticed that in the majority of writing on occupations, nationalism has too often been used as a 'get out of jail free card'. Nationalism's uncertain definition, combined with an almost universal applicability in a world of nation-states, arises as a defacto explanation when historians, social scientists, and political scientists run into behavior that appears to be decidedly irrational.¹⁸ In the case of occupations this implied resistance and rebellion against the occupying power, or, more generally, disregard for one's own safety.

However, it seems that not only have these types of rebellions never truly been as widespread as previously assumed, they are also not the only natural course of nationalism during occupations. The exact opposite case, namely collaboration, has also been motivated by nationalist sentiments. Kocher et al. also make note of this in the example of the German occupation of France, as both the Vichy collaborationists as well as the active resistance movements were deeply nationalistic.¹⁹ The fact that these groups perceived themselves this way is proved by figure 1.

¹⁸ Matthew Adam Kocher, Adria Lawrence, and Nuno P. Monteiro, "The Rabbit in the Hat: Nationalism and Resistance to Foreign Occupation," SSRN Scholarly Paper (Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, August 20, 2013), 2, <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2299837>.

¹⁹ Kocher, Lawrence, and Monteiro, 3.

Figure 1. Members of the youth movement of the NSB, ‘De Jeugdstorm’, posing in front of banners which read “Ons Nationalisme Uw Redding” [Our Nationalism Your Savior].²⁰



However, while these two extremes pull focus in most historical research, in the Dutch example only about 5 per cent of the population actively resisted, and only about 5 per cent actually collaborated. Furthermore, because the Netherlands was subjected to a civil administration rather than a military occupation, the presence of a functional state presents the rare prospect to address the impact of top-down structures on bottom-up nationalism. This offers a unique possibility to address how nationalism was exhibited by the 90 per cent silent majority in their reaction to the state’s impositions, as these top down impositions acted to breach the everyday nationalism of this silent majority.

The relevance of more accurately evaluating the motivations for nationalistic actions in the silent majority has largely been obscured by the ‘goed’ and ‘fout’ narratives that became prominent in the immediate postwar period. Starting immediately after the end of the war, the *Rijksbureau voor Oorlogsdocumentatie* (now the *Nederlands Instituut voor*

²⁰ G.H. Cino, De NSB voert propaganda in de provincie Noord-Holland, 1944, BeeldbankWO2, https://beeldbankwo2.nl/nl/beelden/detail/fd5bc3a2-025a-11e7-904b-d89d6717b464/media/0b4e619b-1719-2d9e-24a3-de206d8d14c8?mode=detail&view=horizontal&rows=1&page=217&fq%5B%5D=search_s_soort_beeld:%22Foto%22&fq%5B%5D=search_i_filter_period:%5B19400000%20TO%2019450000%5D&fq%5B%5D=search_s_geonameid:%22Nederland%22&sort=random%7B1628689789064%7D%20asc&filterAction

Oorlogsdocumentatie) was founded on the directive of the Dutch state. The goal was to produce an official history of the war and occupation.²¹ This task culminated in De Jong's work, *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog*. One important focus of this work was the native population's response to the German occupier's plans with the Dutch territory. The Dutch response took a variety of different shapes, from pragmatic complacency to collaboration, and of course active resistance. However, the positive attitude associated with the postwar restoration of national self-determination in the Netherlands, caused this first 'paradigm' to align itself with a purging process that labeled people as either 'goed' or 'fout' (good or bad).²²

The diametric nature of this first paradigm skewed the general perception of the Dutch people during the German occupation of the Netherlands towards a representation of the Dutch as a deeply defiant and resistant people. While in recent years this trend has reversed somewhat, these established views continue to heavily influence prevailing perceptions of the occupation years.²³ It, therefore comes as no surprise that the immediate postwar narratives of the occupation adopted a distinctive 'us' versus 'them', 'goed' against 'fout' dynamic. This diametric differentiation between good and bad in the occupational narrative was contingent on the national framing of a complete victory on the part of the prevailing Dutch over the Germans. Germany was vilified as an ideologically corrupt oppressor, while the Dutch return to self-determination was marked as a return to legitimacy. National socialism practically vanished from the Netherlands, all its supporters held their tongues, "the roles were reversed", and it was abundantly clear that "they had lost".²⁴ The totality of victory implied that the 'good' or 'bad' categorical discussion of the occupational period became inherently nationalist. In the trend of victors writing their own history, the 'goed' became synonymous with loyalty, patriotism, and steadfastness in the face of a threat to the Dutch nation-state and its monarchy. On the other hand, the 'fout' became attached to a perception of treachery.

This consensus on wartime history was finally challenged in the early 1980s. Hans Blom noted that, while acknowledging that the analysis of much of the preceding work was still valuable, the accompanying connotations of categorical judgment oversimplified the

²¹ Mertens, "'An Explosion of Vitality and Creativity'?", 42.

²² Bob Moore, "'Goed En Fout' or 'Grijs Verleden'?: Competing Perspectives on the History of the Netherlands under German Occupation 1940–1945," *Dutch Crossing* 27, no. 2 (December 2003): 156–57, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03096564.2003.11730829>.

²³ Kees Ribbens, "Strijdonelen De Tweede Wereldoorlog in de Populaire Historische Cultuur" (Rede, Erasmus University Rotterdam, October 25, 2013).

²⁴ Chris van der Heijden, *Grijs Verleden, Nederland En de Tweede Wereldoorlog*, 2nd ed. (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Contact, 2008), 347–48.

highly complicated Dutch perspective.²⁵ Blom recommended expanding the investigation beyond the established scope of moral-political value judgments, and towards the less presentist mentalities and sentiments of what it meant to live in an occupied nation-state.²⁶ The trend that followed saw much more specific investigations into the nuances of the occupation narrative. Peter Romijn was the first to apply Blom's criticisms when he wrote *Snel, Streng en Rechtvaardig: De Afrekening met de 'Foute' Nederlanders* (Swift, Strict and Just: Dealing with the 'Wrong' Dutchmen) in an attempt to take the moralistic judgment out of the prevailing paradigm.²⁷ However, Chris van der Heijden's book '*Grijs Verleden*' could be seen as the first monumental break from the old paradigm, as it drew attention to the vast majority of the Dutch population that had been neither active in the resistance, nor actively collaborating.²⁸

The importance of the majority of the Dutch population within the context of the Nazi's plans for them should not be overlooked as it was they who held the agency in submitting to, or rejecting the Nazi's goals for the Dutch population. Grand plans for the European peoples, although never officially committed to paper by the Nazi high command, were still frequent topics of theorization for Goebbels, Himmler, Goering, and Hitler himself.²⁹ The general trend in their plans skewed towards the ideological and racial purification of the Germanic – Germanic frequently being used synonymously with European, and more specifically western European – countries. This ideological ambition was theorized by Goebbels to take the shape of a national-socialist revolution reminiscent of the Austrian *Anschluss*. However, this pipe-dream was not given the time to prove itself wrong, as the Nazi war machine rolled into the rest of Europe and began forcing their perception of revolution onto the occupied peoples. As Joshua Sander noted, the aim of the occupational administration in the Netherlands was, firstly, to warm the Dutch people to Nazi ideology, and, secondly, to make the Dutch population more Germanic.³⁰ The fact that these processes were unsuccessful cannot be attributed to a 5 per cent minority of the population, as these policies were aimed at the entire population. Thus it only makes sense to address the how the aforementioned 90 per cent silent majority stopped Nazification and Germanicization from taking hold in the Netherlands at the behest of the occupier.

²⁵ Moore, "'Goed En Fout' or 'Grijs Verleden'?", 159–60.

²⁶ Moore, 160.

²⁷ Mertens, "'An Explosion of Vitality and Creativity'?", 53.

²⁸ Moore, "'Goed En Fout' or 'Grijs Verleden'?", 161.

²⁹ Gerhard Hirschfeld, *Nazi Rule and Dutch Collaboration: The Netherlands under German Occupation 1940-1945* (Oxford: Berg, 1988), 28–34.

³⁰ Joshua Robert Sander, "The Greater Germanic Reich: Education, Nazification, and the Creation of a New Dutch Identity in the Nazi-Occupied Netherlands" (PhD Thesis, Tennessee, May 2018), 6.

However, this investigation into popular sentiment among the Dutch population has also been impeded by its own evidence problem caused by the equally intrinsic nature of sentiment and thought. However, some headway has been made in this avenue through the analysis of ego-documents. Expanding on this point, the combination of the historical discussion on the occupation, with nationalism theory is a way to test how we can approach the challenge of sentiment in research. Furthermore, should this methodological lens prove useful, it can expand the repertoire with which to approach nationalism from below in history research. It is, however, particularly important in this instance not to synonymize sentiment with nationalism. While nationalism can certainly manifest as a sentiment, and a motivating one at that, it is only one of many such sentiments, although a particularly important one. As such, while ego-documents could certainly contain evidence of nationalism, this is not the only sentiment present in them, thereby presenting an issue of categorical interpretation. Nevertheless, the real limitation of ego-documents is the problem of effectively representing the general Dutch sentiments during this time, considering the limited amount of source material relative to the size of the population it is meant to represent. However, solely addressing the ‘official’ historical sources would simply repeat the work of De Jong. As such, perhaps the more effective avenue would be to address the previously consulted source material in a different way. Combining previously explored historical sources with nationalism theory and methodology presents more value in said source material.

Namely, the *Stimmungsberichte* (situation and mood reports), that were intended to indicate the standing of the Dutch population on a weekly basis during the occupation. These reports were constructed by several institutions during the occupation years. As Bart Van Der Boom noted, the *Sicherheitspolizei* (SP), the *Wehrmacht*, the National Socialist Movement in the Netherlands (NSB), and even the Nazi party itself, all kept these reports.³¹ They provide descriptions of the interactions between ordinary Dutch people and the German occupational structure. However, because of the distinctive agendas kept by these separate institutions, the narrative presented in them had clearly been shifted to fit the benefit of the institution responsible for writing it.³² Nevertheless, if we address these sources not as an avenue for insight into the sentiments of the people being reported on, but rather as ledgers of actions and discourses witnessed either by informants or the authors themselves, then the influence of this interpretational manipulation is minimized. This approach negates the problem which has

³¹ Bart van der Boom, *“We Leven Nog” De Stemming in Bezet Nederland* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2003), 14.

³² van der Boom, 14.

frequently been attached to the *Stimmingsberichte* as representative sources. Because we can claim that the actions of ordinary Dutch men and women were continuously framed by national structures, considering the permanent breach of subconscious nationhood established above, the observed actions are representative of everyday nationalism. By analyzing the nationalistic framing of these actions, undertaken on day-to-day basis, we can come closer to filling out our understanding of the ordinary Dutch men and women's relationship with the nation during the occupation.

This presents value not merely in gaining specific insight into the specifically national motivations that guided the actions of Dutch occupied individuals, but moreover constructs a divide between the power of nationalism when opposed with other sentiments. The space and time constrictions of this thesis make it unrealistic to approach sentiment in general as a topic. However, this could perhaps indicate that sentiment is not specific enough to be studied as one single concept. The study of specific sentiments as motivational aspects may generate more specific conclusions. The extent, and limits of nationalism as a motivating factor in this historical context can be found in this research.

Furthermore, this case study offers a functional example from which we can continue to fill out the methodological repertoire for the study of nationalism from below. Expanding on this point, this instance of competition between bottom-up and top-down nationalism has largely been left unexplored in the history writing on the twentieth century. However, within the context of an ever-increasing rate of political engagement throughout the second half of the twentieth, and twenty-first, century, which has led to an explosion of divisive issues dominating national political spheres, the assessment of this type of historical investigation is indispensable. Research on the foundations of the nationalistic perspective that divides groups within the same nation can help understand conflicts that are dividing populations the world over.

Occupation and Nationalism

One of the primary goals established for the occupational government was to garner sympathy for national socialism.³³ Following the Dutch surrender on May 15th 1940, the Germans wasted no time seizing the apparatus of state that had proved so vital in the Nazi takeover of Germany. Hours after the official capitulation declaration had been signed, German officials seized all

³³ Sander, "The Greater Germanic Reich: Education, Nazification, and the Creation of a New Dutch Identity in the Nazi-Occupied Netherlands," 9.

radio broadcasting facilities and proceeded to fire all Jewish staff.³⁴ These initial actions go to show the priority with which the Germans wished to control the perception with which their occupation would be viewed. The Nazi propagandists subsequently drew attention to the position of the Netherlands as a ‘Germanic sister people’, and their noble intention to allow the Netherlands to remain largely autonomous.³⁵ The subsequent structural impositions reflected this same attempt at mitigating animosity between the Dutch peoples and the German invaders. The initial power vacuum in the Netherlands was first filled by the *Wehrmacht*, but the Nazi high command quickly endeavored to change this. On May 19th 1940, Dr. Arthur Seyss-Inquart, a prominent Austrian Nazi, met with Hitler to discuss his appointment to the office of *Reichskommissar* of the Netherlands. In this position, Seyss-Inquart, and his subordinates in the civil administration, would be responsible for keeping the Dutch population calm and contented, while slowly converting them to the Nazi ideology.³⁶ On May 29th 1940, the military occupation of the Netherlands officially ended, becoming subjected instead to the civil administration of the *Reichskommissariat* until the end of the war. While, initially, Dutch institutions and Dutch people were overall considered very amicable and cooperative towards the *Reichskommissariat* by the Germans, the civil administration would quickly become extremely unpopular with the Dutch population. The origins of this disdain, as Gerhard Hirschfeld notes, can be attributed to the reservations that Dutch people and institutions experienced when faced with the proposed ideological realignment intended by *Reichskommissar* Seyss-Inquart.³⁷

This ideological realignment has been categorized into two top-down processes, Nazification and Germanicization. It is important to note that the intention of the German occupation of the “Germanic nations” was not to absorb them into the Greater Germanic Reich.³⁸ The Germans did not wish to eradicate the distinction between the Germans and the Dutch in some form of cultural genocide, or as Loe de Jong called it ‘Germanization’.³⁹ Rather, the goal was to accentuate the shared connection between the two nations to recalibrate the Dutch not into a German people, but into a more Germanic people. This process has been

³⁴ Liempt, *Leven in bezet Nederland 1940-1945*, chap. 1.

³⁵ Hirschfeld, *Nazi Rule and Dutch Collaboration*, 31.

³⁶ Liempt, *Leven in bezet Nederland 1940-1945*.

³⁷ Hirschfeld, *Nazi Rule and Dutch Collaboration*, 35.

³⁸ Sander, “The Greater Germanic Reich: Education, Nazification, and the Creation of a New Dutch Identity in the Nazi-Occupied Netherlands,” 6.

³⁹ Loe De Jong, *Het Koninkrijk Der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog Deel 5 Maart '41 - Juli '42*, vol. 5, *Het Koninkrijk Der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog 1939-1945* (Amsterdam: Rijnsinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie Amsterdam, 1974), 248–54.

labeled as Germanicization. What can be concluded from this is that the occupational government aimed at a historical legitimation of Germany as a centralized figure of heritage. Thereby they wished to build a new fundament of greater Germanic nationalism. Nazification, in this respect, was the act of converting the intended populace of this new Europe to a socio-political ideology that legitimated the leadership of the Nazi occupiers, and subsequently the Greater Germanic Reich and its position as a central power in Europe. These processes manifested mainly in incremental alterations to basic societal structures like, for example, education.⁴⁰

With this in mind, the aversion to ideological realignment became nationalistic, as these realignments were actively attempting to alter the structures on which the Dutch socio-political experience of the nation-state rested. This interaction is where we can see the top-down impositions of nationalism, and bottom-up pre-existing nationalism clash. Sinisa Malesavic's theory is applicable here, as it addresses nationalism as an ideology that upholds the idea of popular sovereignty.⁴¹ It is through the popular consideration of the nation that the legitimacy of the state is determined. However, the nationalistic fundamentals that the state relies on to produce legitimacy need to be aligned with the "will of the nation".⁴² These tributary aspects were shared and homogenized among the populace through the introduction of structures like mandated schooling, high literacy rates, standardized vernaculars, and a state monopoly on the legitimate use of force. Once ingrained in the everyday, these structures became mundane, accepted, and banal fundamentals of this nationalist ideology, and as soon as this ideology took hold within the nation-state it became difficult to escape.⁴³ In particular, the standardized Dutch language, and the Dutch school system, which caused a skyrocket in literacy rates, and implied a shared base of (national) knowledge among peers, created a foundation for effortless communication between the Dutch population. This facilitated a wider participation in politics, a more informed perception of the occurrences within national boundaries through newspapers, and a generally recognized perception of culture in song and literature, just to name a few examples. These structures produce the context within which, and the tools with which, ordinary Dutch men and women interacted in everyday life. However, these foundations were perceived as legitimate structures imposed by legitimate governments, and, at the start of

⁴⁰ Joshua Hagen, "Historic Preservation in Nazi Germany: Place, Memory, and Nationalism," *Journal of Historical Geography* 35, no. 4 (October 2009): 9, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhg.2009.01.020>.

⁴¹ Sinisa Malesevic, *Nation-States and Nationalisms : Organization, Ideology and Solidarity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013), 11.

⁴² Malesevic, 64, 74.

⁴³ Malesevic, 131.

World War II, had already been perceived that way for several generations. Thus, while their acceptance did reproduce the nation by virtue of nationalism, this nationalism was distinctively banal and subconscious, as theorized by Michael Billig.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, the banal acceptance of these structures remained contingent on the perceived legitimacy of the state which enforced them. As such, when the Nazis began to impose new structures, the old structures retained their legitimacy in the eyes of the nation as they had been imposed by the legitimate Dutch government.

The reason that Malesevic's theory should be applied here is because it permits the analysis of nationalism as a bottom-up process. By placing the focus on the process of affirmation or rejection of national structures with which people interact every day, this theory returns agency to the nation-state's constituents. As the 'legitimate' Dutch state was in exile, it had lost executive control over the very institutions that construct and maintain these national structures. Nevertheless, the majority of the Dutch population retained nationalistic sentiments that competed with the top-down impositions of the *Reichskommissariat*. This assertion is nothing, new, however by framing everyday action this way, we can identify specific instances during which nationalism manifested in contestation to these impositions. The reactions of the population to these top-down impositions reveal themselves as evidence of nationalism from below, thereby making this case extremely valuable to the study of this phenomenon in the wider discipline of nationalism studies.

Furthermore, we should also view the Nazification and Germanicization goals of the *Reichskommissariat* as top-down nationalism. We can make this assertion because, based on the same structure described by Malesavic, the intended end goal of the Nazi civil administration was to foster the legitimation of its own political ideology and governance among the populace. However, the only practical way that the *Reichskommissariat* could go about doing this was by adjusting the very structures that legitimated the Dutch state that was now exiled in London. This explains why the amicable and cooperative attitude of the Dutch became increasingly anti-German as time went on. Nevertheless, whether successful or not, these structural changes, even something as seemingly insignificant as changing the names of streets and street-signs, or forcing the national transportation service to provide specialized train compartments for the *Wehrmacht*, should be viewed as a top-down imposition of nationalism. This point is accentuated by examples such as the one shown in figure 2, in which a Dutch street was renamed after a highly decorated Dutch SS volunteer Gerardus Mooijman.

⁴⁴ Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, 5.

Mooijman had destroyed several tanks while fighting for the Third Reich, and was one of the first foreign SS members to win the Knight's Cross.⁴⁵

Figure 2. Mayor Buitenhuis of the Schagen Municipality in North Holland handing a sign which reads “Gerardus Mooijmanstraat” to the municipal carpenter.⁴⁶



Changes like these were intended to accentuate the artificial connection between the Dutch and the German occupiers, in an attempt to make the Dutch people more Germanic, and more responsive to Nazi ideology. This was intended to make an impact by simply exposing the Dutch population to these structures. This same exposure is also how these structural factors became legitimate in the first place. The only difference is that in the German changes to these structures were not given sufficient time to become subconsciously accepted. Nevertheless, just because the tactic of exposure was not overtly active, it was still intended to promote the

⁴⁵ Marc Rikmenspoel, *Knight's Cross Winners of the Waffen SS* (Pen and Sword Military, 2020), 28.

⁴⁶ J. Kuiper, De eerste gemeente van ons land die een 'Gerardus Mooymanstraat' heeft, is de gemeente Schagen. De burgemeester van Schagen, de heer Buitenhuis, reikt de gemeentetimmerman het naambord aan, dat aan de muur van de hoekwoning van de voormalige Landbouwdwarsstraat moet worden bevestigd. 1943, BeeldbankWO2, https://beeldbankwo2.nl/nl/beelden/detail/db8d4fbc-0259-11e7-904b-d89d6717b464/media/9c8c8473-3e54-e247-1de0-43c10e4938d4?mode=detail&view=horizontal&rows=1&page=82&fq%5B%5D=search_s_soort_beeld:%22Foto%22&fq%5B%5D=search_i_filter_period:%5B19400000%20TO%2019450000%5D&fq%5B%5D=search_s_geonameid:%22Nederland%22&sort=random%7B1628689789064%7D%20asc&filterAction

type of centralized Germanic nationalism, noted above, in the long run. As such, in combination with pre-existing nationalism perceptible in Dutch people living their everyday lives, we notice a narrative of competing nationalisms.

The hypothesis of this research follows from this context of competing nationalisms. Namely, that the lack of Germanicization's and Nazification's success in achieving their goals in the occupied Netherlands was the result of everyday nationalism on the part of the silent majority. We will test this hypothesis by analyzing the actions of the Dutch population as reported on in the *Stimmungsberichte*, in terms of everyday nationalism. Based on the confirmation of this hypothesis we can answer the question: How did the German *Reichskommissariat's* changes to national structures in the Netherlands between 1940 and 1945 influence the ordinary Dutch men's and women's displays of everyday nationalism?

Answering this more descriptive question does not tread new ground in the literature on the German occupation of the Netherlands. However, by considering the consensus that exists on this topic in this body of literature, we can confirm that the change in theoretical approach that this thesis proposes does not counter the general trends that have already been identified. This thesis is not aimed at disputing these established conclusion. Naturally, the remarkably large catalogue of established conclusions regarding this case study is based on a far more comprehensive primary source corpus than this thesis. However, by furthermore confirming these established conclusions we can verify the capacity of the theory and methodology for analyzing the dynamics of everyday nationalism in context of occupation, especially occupations effected by the Nazis.

To do this we will first construct the methodology with which we can address the *Stimmungsberichte*. To do this we must take discern the methodological concerns implicit in the combination of the theoretical approach with the establish historiography. With these concerns noted, we can elaborate on the frame of competing nationalisms, and thereby produce a more dynamic perception of nationalism from below in conjunction with top-down nationalism to inform the analysis. Hereafter the analytical framework can be laid, taking into account the theoretical consideration which define the field of nationalism studies. With the methodology established we will elaborate on the process by which the primary source corpus was determined. This will ensure that all the relevant questions, for both sub-disciplines under investigation have been addressed in the analysis.

Chapter 2: Methodology

The methodology applied in this thesis can be summed up as follows. Namely, we will be looking at the *Stimmungsberichte* with a specific focus on reports on the actions of the Dutch population. These actions will hereafter be categorized based on the framing which provoked them. This categorization will determine the temperature of the nationalism displayed in the action, as well as the situational context that caused the temperature change. This situational context more specifically refers to the structural changes that the occupier was making, thereby allowing us to view the retaliatory actions as inherently nationalistic. Based on this categorization we can analyze the general trends that everyday nationalism, in response to these structural changes, exhibited over time during the occupation. Before delving into more detail regarding this methodology we need to establish the methodological considerations on which this approach was founded.

Methodological Concerns: Nationalist Perspectivism

Fundamental to the application of nationalism theory is an active attempt to avoid methodological nationalism and presentism. Failing to do so will lead to value judgments, whether intentional or not, being made about choices that could well have been motivated by the different variants of the same sentiment. As such, it is important to consider that both categories of this ‘*goed*’ versus ‘*fout*’ classification were undeniably nationalist. The manifestation of this sentiment has been perceived as either nationalist or treacherous based on who controlled the executive authority of the state over the nation. We must not attach value judgments to nationalism exactly because of this tendency. During the occupation, the *Reichskommissariat* held executive authority over the Netherlands, and therefore promoted its own, self-perpetuating brand of nationalism. Upon the country’s liberation, the tables turned, and those who had remained loyal to the exiled state were considered the legitimate nationalists by that state.⁴⁷ The positive associations to specific nationalist sentiments were contingent on the outcome of historical events, and not on the presence of nationalistic sentiments themselves.

This fundamental consideration affirms the point that nationalism has to be approached in historical research, both in terms of its top-down and bottom-up variants, with

⁴⁷ van der Heijden, *Grijs Verleden, Nederland En de Tweede Wereldoorlog*, 349–52.

methodological perspectivism. More specifically, the hegemonic narrative of what is considered nationalist, and what is considered treacherous is a matter of perception, context, and, when approached retrospectively, the authorial liberty to depict protagonists in historic narratives. The presence of a protagonist in national narratives is a universal symptom of a world comprised of nation-states. The recognition of this is one thing, but to truly see the impact of this assertion we must retroactively address the history of this time in the context of varying perspectives on everyday life. As Kees Ribbens and Maria Grever have noted, the constructions of coherent, monolithic narratives enforce the perspective of historical narratives as ‘nostalgic’, or ‘demonic’.⁴⁸ We see this demonization, in particular, having manifested itself in the historiography of the occupation, spanning from the immediate postwar all the way to the 1980s. However, they also distort the perspectivism of nationalism on human actions in history. As such, rather than looking at what was nationalist and what was not, we need to address the history of the occupation within the context of competing nationalisms.

Methodological Frame **Competing Nationalisms**

The *Reichskommissariat* competed with the pre-existing nationalism present in the majority of the population in an attempt to garner legitimacy. Nazification in particular was directly at odds with the rigid nationhood of much of the Dutch population. This nationalist sentiment was understandably anti-German from the very beginning, considering the invasion of Dutch territory, as well as their subsequent ideological impositions.⁴⁹ It was the conflict between this pre-existing nationalism, and the ideological re-calibration efforts of the *Reichskommissariat*, that acted to halt the intentions of the occupation. As noted above, despite the relative inactivity of the majority of the Dutch population, the lack of ideological, political, or more generally national, adaptation to the German presence still acted to resist the occupational government, even if this was subconscious, passive, and only on grounds of ideological rigidity. As such, the silent majority of the nation carried the power to either permit or reject, the intention of the goals of the occupation based on national considerations.

Defiance did not manifest itself in widely supported rebellions. It was the everyday experience of the nation that had been subjected to change. As such, it was in the everyday

⁴⁸ Maria Grever and Kees Ribbens, *Nationale Identiteit En Meervoudig Verleden* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2007), 50–51.

⁴⁹ van der Boom, “*We Leven Nog*” *De Stemming in Bezet Nederland*, 135.

experience of the nation, hereafter termed ‘everyday nationalism’, that caused nationalism to become visible. Everyday nationalism has been defined as a salient re-affirmation of the nation in the everyday.⁵⁰ This type of nationalist thinking is largely subconscious, only materializing based on contextual interactions, which caused these manifestations to become hotter, more conscious, and therefore more salient. As such the underlying nationhood that motivated everyday nationalism was extremely resilient to change.⁵¹ This explains why the Dutch population did not accept the impositions of the German *Reichskommissariat* as legitimate. There is a rigidity to the experience of one’s nation-state (national identity), once it has been fully formed.

Everyday nationalism as a conceptual approach also explains why this ideological rejection did not manifest itself in widespread rebellions or uprisings. The everyday lives of the silent majority remained largely unchanged at first because the structural basis of everyday life also remained largely unchanged. As the structural factors that shaped the everyday experience of the nation became subject to change the Dutch people’s nationalism became hotter. The reaction was as a desire to see things return to ‘normal’. ‘Normal’ in this case would have been classified as a return to self-determination, self-governance, and essentially ‘traditional’ structures of state and nation before the start of the occupation. This manifested itself in the everyday as a nationalist repertoire of contention that, for example, saw bus drivers refuse service to members of the *Wehrmacht*, adolescents concocting discriminatory songs, or signs pointing to German institutions being covered in tar.⁵²

The concept of ‘repertoires of contention’ is of prime importance here. The concept coined by Charles Tilly acts as perhaps the only frame through which the silent majority, being addressed in this case study, could have continued to interact in politics.⁵³ As such, it is undeniably the most effective way to describe these actions. Within the context of the everyday, the repertoire with which the occupier was addressed was the only voice that the ordinary Dutch man or woman would get in the administration of ‘their’ nation. Such actions became progressively more common as the occupation became more exploitative. The media was gagged, only allowed to speak through the filter of the Nazi propaganda machine almost right from the beginning, and the NSB was made the only legal political party on January 1st, 1942.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Fox and Ginderachter, “Introduction,” 550.

⁵¹ Malesevic, *Nation-States and Nationalisms : Organization, Ideology and Solidarity*, 131.

⁵² Nederlands Instituut voor Militaire Historie, Den Haag, Duitse bezetting, Toegang 419, inventarisnummer. 45.

⁵³ Doug Mcadam, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly, “Dynamics of Contention,” n.d., 16.

⁵⁴ Liempt, *Leven in bezet Nederland 1940-1945*, 641.

The limitations to the individual's agency in political questions naturally constrained these repertoires. However, repertoires of contention should be more widely defined as "what people know they can do when they want to oppose a public decision they consider unjust or threatening".⁵⁵ In the context of occupation what people knew they 'could do' without practically signing their own arrest warrants, was limited to more passive forms of resistance.

Analytical Framework: Everyday Nationalism

The concept of everyday nationalism introduces a much-needed quality of dynamism to expressions of nationalism. The need for this is evident in the fact that, as Eric Storm noted when reviewing the theory that has grown around Micheal Billig's original concept of banal nationalism, many of these studies never directly distinguished between banal nationalism, and cold nationalism – in line with Brubaker's perception of groupism as a fluctuating phenomenon for categories.⁵⁶ Consequently, it has become difficult to construct a methodology that focuses on any specific type of nationalist expression.

Jones and Merriman have addressed this issue by moving away from the terminological distinctions of banal, cold, and hot nationalism towards a more encompassing study of everyday nationalism.⁵⁷ Everyday nationalism encompasses hot, cold, and banal nationalism, aiming at a more dynamic analysis of nationalism from below. Cold and hot nationalism were always inadequate terms. Rather we should move towards a less categorical lexis of cooling and heating nationalism. Doing so stops the reliance on ideal types and precludes the tendency to generalize. As such, research of these subjects is more likely to address agency when looking at the temperature of nationalism.⁵⁸ Furthermore, Billig cites Craig Calhoun in the key reflection that a nation is reproduced through both banal and hot means, but that these should be seen as points on a scale.⁵⁹ This adjustment in the broader concept of nationalism also implies that banal, heating and cooling nationalism "can occur at the same time in the same place".⁶⁰ However, perhaps most importantly, these heating, cooling, or banal factors are fluid.

⁵⁵ Donatella Della Porta, "Repertoires of Contention," in *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements*, January 14, 2013, 249.

⁵⁶ "When Did Nationalism Become Banal? The Nationalization of the Domestic Sphere in Spain - Eric Storm, 2020," accessed November 16, 2020, <https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/doi/full/10.1177/0265691420910948>; Brubaker, "Rogers Brubaker."

⁵⁷ Rhys Jones and Peter Merriman, "Hot, Banal and Everyday Nationalism: Bilingual Road Signs in Wales," *Political Geography* 28, no. 3 (March 1, 2009): 166, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2009.03.002>.

⁵⁸ Michael Billig, "Banal Nationalism and the Imagining of Politics," in *Everyday Nationhood* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 9–10.

⁵⁹ Billig, 9–10.

⁶⁰ Billig, 9.

The hot can eventually become banal, and the cold can become hot. Storm shows as much when claiming that the most promising pursuit for historians studying nationalism is the exploration of the nationalization of the mundane domestic sphere. Storm refers to examples of domestic architecture, and cuisine, noticing that these practices were slowly ingrained into the realm of the banal. We are, of course studying the exact opposite dynamic, which implies that these things can certainly be pushed back into heating nationalism. In fact, the situations in which the mundane domestic sphere is perceived as consciously contra-national, as in this case study, are equally valuable in determining the conditions under which this nationalization can and did take place. Top-down nationalistic activities also tend to draw on these everyday, banal, subconscious affirmations of nationalism. Craig Calhoun has affirmed as much when he claimed that it was the subconscious reproduction of the nation-state that permits nationalism to serve political purposes.⁶¹ On the other hand, it is the lack of subconscious acceptance on the part of the general populace that stops nationalism from serving political purposes. Thus, while it is still useful to differentiate between banal, cold, and hot nationalism, this pursuit is more descriptive than analytical. Rather it is the context in which nationalistic expression is forced to change its temperature that should be studied. In regards to studying nationalism from below, shifting focus to the changing temperature gives agency back to ordinary people as it is they who respond to these ‘national stimuli’ and thereby demonstrate which contexts spark heating or cooling nationalist actions.

Everyday nationalism encompasses this variable temperature by addressing the dynamic expression of ordinary people doing ordinary national things.⁶² The everyday experience of the nation is not exclusively either a banal, or hot, passionate, flag-waving experience, and thus everyday nationalism integrates the banal and the novel into a more representative analytical tool.⁶³ It needs to be taken into account that the nationalistic intensity or intention of these actions is variable. Thus, to interpret the reproduction of the nation in any one action, we need to interpret the context, or frame in which this action is undergone.

These frames can be categorized through the varying salience of nationalist intention in the actions of individuals. Johnathan Hearn and Marco Antonsich define three distinct levels of this salience by which the nation is reproduced in everyday actions. In the first order frames, and the most noticeable, nationalism can enter into everyday consciousness as the fundamental

⁶¹ Craig Calhoun, “The Rhetoric of Nationalism,” in *Everyday Nationhood*, ed. Michael Skey and Marco Antonsich (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2017), 19, https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-57098-7_2.

⁶² Fox and Ginderachter, “Introduction,” 550.

⁶³ Jones and Merriman, “Hot, Banal and Everyday Nationalism,” 166.

object of an action. For example, planning a birthday celebration for the nation's monarch acts as an outward expression of loyalty towards this symbol of the nation-state. In the second-order framing, nationalism can frame the action as a conscious consideration, even if the intention of the action is not to express nationalism. This is exemplified in, for instance, not surrendering a seat on the train to a German *Wehrmacht* officer. This may spite the officer, as they perceive it as an attempt to inconvenience him because he is German. However, this may well just be because an individual is tired and would rather remain seated themselves. In the third-order framing, nationalism can act exclusively as a subconscious background assumption.⁶⁴ This last category is essentially an experience of banal nationalism where the nation is subconscious, "unseen, unheard, and unnoticed."⁶⁵ To simplify the reliance on terminology in terms of this analytical framework, these frames can be essentially be equated to certain ranges of nationalistic intensity on a cold to hot scale. The third order being banal to cold, the second order being cold to warm, and the first being hot to such a degree to warrant outward expression of nationalism.

With these three ranges in mind, we can categorize the motivational frame behind actions that were reported on in the *Stimmungsberichte*. By determining the general trends and inclinations in this categorization, we can perceive the dynamics with which everyday nationalism was exhibited by the majority of the Dutch population. As such, we can establish an empirical base for hypothesizing about the nation's resistance to Nazification and Germanicization, and subsequently address the research question. Furthermore, the interpretation of specific actions can begin to approach an understanding of how the nation is reproduced in the actions of individuals in ordinary life. The dynamics of these actions, as repertoires of contention, during the span of the occupation serves to show how everyday nationalism developed, as the structural changes of the *Reichskommissariat* became increasingly impactful.

Theoretical Considerations

Interpretative evidence of the sort noted above is not necessarily effective when trying to look at the nature of nationalism from below, as the methodology still rests on the theoretical assumptions of Malesavic. Namely, that the relationship between nation and state is based on

⁶⁴ Jonathan Hearn and Marco Antonsich, "Theoretical and Methodological Considerations for the Study of Banal and Everyday Nationalism," 2018, 3.

⁶⁵ Fox and Ginderachter, "Introduction," 550.

popular sovereignty, and that this is constructed through continued exposure, in everyday life, to structural facets of that specific nation-state. The actions of individuals may function as evidence of how the nation is actually engrained in everyday life, but it does not inherently evidence where this influence originates. Hearn and Antonsich put it best when asking:

*“If people intermittently act in terms of the nation, does everyday nationalism abide only in those moments, or are these taken as evidence of an underlying and relatively constant condition—something more like Billig’s banal nationalism? Is the nation itself created in these moments of expression, or do they simply evidence a nation which is constantly underlying?”*⁶⁶

If actions in terms of the nation were only momentary occurrences in everyday life, then they may well be considered reactive, or incidental nationalism, as the action is responsible for the framing. On the other hand, when this condition is constantly underlying, we can argue that the frame instigates the action.

This case study sets a precedent by showing that nationalism from below is not contingent on the continued reproduction of a legitimate state which carries executive authority over its nation. To clarify, a state that is considered legitimate by virtue of popular sovereignty does not need to have executive authority over the nation to retain this legitimacy. On the other hand, an illegitimate state that does have executive authority over the nation cannot rely on this authority to generate legitimacy. At least not within a five-year window. If the actions of Dutch individuals continued to reproduce the variant of everyday life that was being threatened by the Germans, in opposition to structural changes, then this variant of nationalism can be seen to stay with the nation beyond the reproduction of the state’s legitimacy. A good metaphorical comparison would be a child’s continued adherence to the lessons of a parent after leaving their childhood home. The love that the child holds for their parent is an underlying condition, and therefore they adhere to the lessons of said parent even after that parent no longer holds executive authority over the context of the child’s life. In this context, an underlying nationalism reaffirmed the exiled Dutch state’s legitimacy, even though the structures that Malesavic claims produced this legitimacy, were being changed by an illegitimate state. As

⁶⁶ Hearn and Antonsich, “Theoretical and Methodological Considerations for the Study of Banal and Everyday Nationalism,” 5.

such, if we can accept Malesavic's model as accurate, then we can also accept nationalism from below as a constant underlying condition.

In this regard, we cannot forget that everyday nationalism is a contingent sub-discipline that is inherently engrained in a larger national context. After all, while nationalism from below does tend to look at smaller phenomena, these individual considerations still need to be contextualized within the nation-state. In other words, one cannot look at nationalism from below without discussing the implications and interactions with nationalism from the top-down.

Primary Sources **Selection**

This section will delve into the methodological and theoretical considerations that motivated the primary source selection. Initially, we need to narrow down the potential sources under discussion by expanding on the aims of the primary source analysis. After this, we may expand on the value of the selected sources: the *Stimmungsberichte*. This will be done by engraining the motivations behind this choice in the discussions that dominate the source selection of both nationalism studies, and the history of the occupation of the Netherlands.

This project faced challenges with operationalization right from the start due to the difficulty in addressing nationalism from below without any new, innovative form of concrete empirical evidence. This challenge was reflected in addressing sentiments, or intrinsic motivations of any kind, in historical research. The paradigmatic oversimplification of this endeavor in describing the Dutch people's sentiments during the occupation, discussed in the introduction, also imposes a lack of telling primary research. Now, because the temporal proximity to the occupation has passed, the opportunity to produce oral histories of any magnitude has been lost.

An attempt to address this gap in the literature has been made in recent years by Bart Van Der Boom by focusing on a noteworthy quantity of ego documents. This work was able to draw general conclusions about the sentiments of ordinary Dutch people during this time. Works like Van Der Boom's lay the groundwork that gave direction to smaller and more focused research projects such as this. For example, as Joke Kuyvenhoven-Broek wrote, in her review of Van Der Boom's book, in discussing what the Dutch people actually thought about the shift of power, it was generally considered ludicrous that another power could exercise

control over the Dutch territories and people.⁶⁷ The fact that this specific grievance was expressed in national terms denotes an aversion to the German occupational government precisely because this government was not Dutch, framing the subsequent aversion as a lack of ethnic/nationality-based legitimacy. This informs the need for a study of nationalism and legitimacy on this topic.

Ego-documents cannot address this need, as they pose several methodological concerns of their own, which need to be considered when discussing sentiment of any kind, and nationalism in particular. The practical issue with these sources lies in the inability to draw conclusions that pertain to the entire nation, or any significant sub-category of it, as these sources were written by, and therefore concern the individual. Yet, the state, even if under the control of an occupying force, did not eliminate social interaction. As Anthony Smith makes clear in his endeavor to define nationalism, a central aspect of what differentiates ethnicity from nation is a distinct public culture, as opposed to shared common cultural elements.⁶⁸ The nation is produced by the horizontal experience between people who share in their belief in it, and thus we have to look beyond the individual and look at collectives.⁶⁹ This was also the largest methodological consideration of Van Der Boom's focus on diaries. The availability of diaries is far and wide in between, thereby providing little in the way of focused research on more specific segments of society. Furthermore, the scarcity of diaries as source material means that they cannot be used to draw far-reaching conclusions about any significant percentage of the population. Even if all consulted diaries were to express the same sentimental musings about their disdain for the occupying Germans, then at most this would be telling of the category of Dutch people who kept diaries. While categorically still telling of the Dutch population, the limitations make it functionally impossible to analyze approximately 90 per cent of the population. This criticism extends to all types of ego-documents, including family correspondence. Of course, this should not reflect poorly on the value of ego-documents themselves, rather the scarcity of preserved sources relative to the size of the population.

Everyday nationalism looks at the public sphere in which standard national routine, and specific national competencies become salient. Because of this methodology, which focuses on the frames that prompt nationalist action in everyday life, we do not need to address the

⁶⁷ Joke Kuyvenhoven-Broek, "Bart van Der Boom, We Leven Nog. De Stemming in Bezet Nederland," *TSEG/ Low Countries Journal of Social and Economic History* 1, no. 4 (December 15, 2004): 154, <https://doi.org/10.18352/tseg.861>.

⁶⁸ Smith, *Nationalism*, 14.

⁶⁹ Smith, 20.

sentiments of the Dutch population directly. The first, second, and third-order framing with which the actions will be categorized are telling of underlying nationalism, even if this was not the intentional result of the individual. However, it was the context that provoked these actions that hold more value for the wider historical narrative, considering the descriptive nature of addressing the temperature of instances of nationalism. This means we need to establish sources that not only described the actions of ordinary Dutch individuals, but also the local, and national contexts in which these actions took place.

Ego documents are not necessarily excluded in this case, as many diaries and family-correspondences do describe the actions and everyday observations of the writers. However, considering the biases and purposes with which these sources were written, we are left in the dark about a lot of underlying factors that motivate the authorial intent. Considering this we had to look for sources in which these intents were more visible.

The best sources for this purpose are the *Stimmungsberichte*. These sources have largely been discounted in historical research because they were written by the Germans, and therefore had little to say about the way the Dutch population actually felt about the occupation. There is a point to this critique. The external view implies a lack of insight on intrinsic sentiments. Also, the institutional bias skews the interpretation of actions and discourse.⁷⁰ Bob Moore has claimed that these *Stimmungsberichte*, do not provide clear information about the sentiment of the Dutch population.⁷¹ While the inability to construct accurate oral histories implies that this cannot be empirically established anymore, we should assume that Moore's criticism is valid, as the private nature of sentiment would suggest.

However, these sources are suited for this research as we are not addressing broad sentiment directly. Firstly, direct, outward expression of sentiment is so rare that, relative to the size of the population under discussion, these sources lose their representative capacity. There are so few cases of Dutch individuals espousing personal internal monologues about their place in an occupied nation, that we should not attempt to search for these instances with any dedication. This does not mean, however, that the nationalism of the Dutch population existed purely in the private sphere. The occupation did not imply an immediate retreat of the public sphere. People still engaged in public activities and lived day-to-day lives. The *Stimmungsberichte* were written based on information gathered from observable interactions in the public sphere, thereby granting us a view of these actions. Most importantly is, however,

⁷⁰ van der Boom, "We Leven Nog" *De Stemming in Bezet Nederland*, 14.

⁷¹ Moore, "'Goed En Fout' or 'Grijs Verleden'?", 162.

that because the occupier had a clear aim for their policies in the Netherlands, and these reports were circulated in the institutions responsible for realizing this aim, we can take it as granted that these reports were intended to contribute to the realization of this aim. Ad van Liempt has shown as much when frequently referring back to the weekly reports in reference to the *Reichskommissariat*'s response to the backlash caused by specific policies.⁷² The use of this type of intelligence denotes that the *Reichskommissariat* was trying to change the 'stimmung' of the Dutch population. We can infer from what we know about the aims of the *Reichskommissariat* in the Netherlands, that the purpose of this was, in turn, to promote the Germanicization and Nazification of the population. As such, the reports in question directly bring to light the instances in which the Dutch population clashed with the *Reichskommissariat*'s policies, and how this was opposing the aims of Germanicization and Nazification. As these policies can be seen as instances of top-down nationalism, the *Stimmungsberichte* clearly show the instances in which nationalist policies clashed with nationalism from below. These instances not only describe the actions taken and the people who took them but also elicit the context which provoked the actions in question.

Source Criticism

The introduction of *Stimmungsberichte* in the Nazi administration was essentially a remnant of situational intelligence reports that had also been used in World War I. Fears of internal disloyalty caused German officials to commission *Stimmungsberichte* from local district commanders as early as 1915.⁷³ In the absence of democratic opinion polling, the totalitarian state needed these sources of information to maintain the loyalty of, and gain knowledge of opposition movements within, its population.⁷⁴ Thus, In Nazi Germany, these reports were being produced by police forces, government institutions like the ministry of the interior, and other branches of the Nazi machine as far back as 1933.⁷⁵ However, as the Nazis' grasp on power consolidated the purpose of the *Stimmungsberichte* also evolved. Institutions like the *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD), translating to Security Service, began shifting focus to research intelligence.⁷⁶ The head of this institution, Reinhardt Heydrich's aim for the Nazi intelligence

⁷² Liempt, *Leven in bezet Nederland 1940-1945*, 265.

⁷³ Matteo Ermacora, "Civilian Morale," in *International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, n.d., 4, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/pdf/1914-1918-Online-civilian_morale-2015-08-10.pdf.

⁷⁴ Otto Dov Kulka, "Die Nürnberger Rassengesetze und die deutsche Bevölkerung im Lichte geheimer NS-Lage- und Stimmungsberichte," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 1984, 586.

⁷⁵ Kulka, 586.

⁷⁶ Michael Burleigh, *The Third Reich: A New History* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000), 180.

service was akin to a ‘Big Brother’ program, intending to see every person in the Reich under uninterrupted supervision.⁷⁷ The increased surveillance evolved the value of *Stimmungsberichte* from situational intelligence to a reactive tool for nationwide social control. This capacity for control is the reason that institutions continued to produce these reports in the occupied territories following the start of World War II.

When discussing the *Stimmungsberichte* as primary source material, however, it is imperative to understand the purpose of these documents within the occupational context. Of course, it is equally important in this to note the institution’s agendas, as *Stimmungsberichte* were produced by the *Wehrmacht*, as well as the SD, and other institutions as well. The Nazi bureaucracy was well known for infighting between institutions, which is likely why institutions like the NSDAP, the SD, and the *Wehrmacht* all kept their own *Stimmungsberichte*. As such, some question on the authenticity of the interpretation of the actions described in the reports does need to be established. For instance, it comes as no surprise that the *Wehrmacht* happened to find evidence showing that the Dutch population would prefer to be subjected to a military occupation. Nevertheless, the general purpose for all these reports can be abstracted to the goal of a continued presence in the Netherlands. For example, the SD’s explicitly recorded goal makes this ambition quite explicit. As Marnix Croes and Peter Tammes posited, the goal between 1941 and 1944 was to report, as objectively as possible, on the developments in politics, economy, society, and culture in the Netherlands. Furthermore, considering the lack of political freedom, or freedom of the press, the SD, as a functional example, described the goal of their activities as follows:

*“den Befehlshaber der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD einen so klaren und gut begründeten Bericht über alle stimmungsmässigen Fragen in in den betreffenden Bereich zu geben, dass der Reichskommissar so genau unterrichtet werden kann, dass künftige Fehler vermieden und etwabereits begangene berichtigt werden können.”*⁷⁸

[to give the commanders of the Security Police and the SD such a clear and well-founded report on all mood-related questions in the area under consideration that the *Reichskommissaris* [Seyss-Inquart] can be informed so precisely that future

⁷⁷ Karl Dietrich Bracher, *The German Dictatorship; the Origins, Structure, and Effects of National Socialism* (New York, Praeger Publishers, 1970), 166–67, <http://archive.org/details/germandictatorsh00brac>.

⁷⁸ “Leitlinien für die Berichterstattung’ d.d. 14-8-1940. NIOD, 77-85: 50B

mistakes can be avoided and any mistakes that have already been made can be corrected]

For the *Wehrmacht*, by which the *Stimmungsberichte* under consideration in this research were written, the purpose, at least to some degree should be viewed as fundamentally similar. More specifically, The *Wehrmacht* intended to use the reports to generate a politically motivated perception of the Dutch population and their opinions on the occupying forces so that they could maintain the most significant power over their own situation. We can infer this based on the proposition that, until early 1941, the *Wehrmacht* likely did not produce any *Stimmungsberichte*. As Jennifer Foray posits, the *Wehrmacht* had good reason to assume that it could stay largely removed from the occupied population's squabbles, as well as inter-institutional power struggles.⁷⁹ When this perception ceased to be realistic, after the *Reichskommissariat* began making structural changes in the Netherlands, the *Wehrmacht* began producing *Stimmungsberichte* on a weekly basis alongside the SD and other institutions. We can infer that this was done to gain a similar footing as the SD, in their attempt to control Nazi high command's perceptions of the occupation. Foray asserts as much when claiming that the true impasse for the *Wehrmacht* lay between demonstrating their effectiveness at maintaining security and order in the occupied Netherlands and making the territory seem so secure and safe that redeployment to less peaceful fronts may be ordered by Berlin.⁸⁰

However, we cannot exclusively approach the purpose of these documents within the desires of the *Wehrmacht* field command stationed in the Netherlands. We must also consider the grander purpose of these documents in the grand plans of Nazi high command. Namely, the Germanicization and Nazification goals that Hitler had bestowed upon *Reichskommissar* Seyss-Inquart. Within these larger goals, the *Stimmungsberichte* produced by the *Wehrmacht* must also have demonstrated some value in attaining these goals. It is, of course, of greater value for this thesis to recognize the accuracy with which the actions, and actions alone, were being reported on. We can naturally expect some exaggeration both to the up and downplay of the situation in an attempt to leave the primary impasse for the *Wehrmacht* in uncertainty. However, these types of assessments were based on generalizations. When actions of individuals or even groups were reported on, it is unlikely that these events did not take place. As such, the nationalist framing of these actions can be ascertained.

⁷⁹ Jennifer L. Foray, "The 'Clean Wehrmacht' in the German-Occupied Netherlands, 1940–5," *Journal of Contemporary History* 45, no. 4 (2010): 773.

⁸⁰ Foray, 777.

The Netherlands Institute for Military History's (NIHM) collection on the German occupation, which was compiled through a fusion of several occupation-related collections that existed in the former Institute of Military History (IMG), contains a selection of *Stimmungberichte* written between January 1942 and December 1944 by the Wehrmacht field command post, designation number 724. This collection began its assembly process very closely following the end of the conflict and continued this process until 1965.⁸¹

⁸¹ DE REE Archiefsystemen BV, "Opgave van Onderdelen van de Kriegsmarine in Nederland. Fotokopie Uit: Die Deutsche Kriegsmarine 1939 - 1945 Door W. Lohmann En H.H. Hildebrand" (NIMH / Nederlands Instituut voor Militaire Historie), accessed March 3, 2021, <https://www.archieven.nl/nl/zoeken?mivast=0&mizig=210&miadt=2231&miaet=1&micode=419&minr=892930&miview=inv2>.

Chapter 3: Analysis

Structured Analysis

The analysis of the *Stimmungsberichte* is aimed in particular at identifying the instances by which the report's author described the actions that made up the everyday repertoires of contention of the Dutch population. These actions are interpreted based on their everyday nationalist framing in either a first, second, or third order frame. This will allow us to gauge the reason for the shape that the observed everyday nationalism took, based on the action itself, and the occupational and national context. These clashes can further be categorized into the more specific repertoires of contention. Namely, the resistance to Nazi attempts at fostering agreeable relations or legitimacy, demonstrations of loyalty towards the house of Orange (Orangeism), petty inconveniencing of German's in the Netherlands, repertoires focused against the NSB, and the national solidarity with Dutch Jews.

The actions of the Dutch population, furthermore, also include discursive elements. Physical demonstrations of nationalism did not compose the entirety of the Dutch population's repertoires of contention. The specific instances of commonplace discourse which was observed by the *Wehrmacht* also served as repertoires of contention for the Dutch population. This will be analyzed using the same interpretation of framing and contextualized in accordance with the top-down impositions. The choice to voice contentious opinions in public is, in this case, also considered an action worth categorizing and analyzing.

Fostering Relations/Legitimacy

Within the framework of a legitimate state that Malesavic explicated, the *Stimmungsbericht* for January 1942 demonstrates the degree to which the *Reichskommissariat* actively wanted to foster legitimacy, and that they were failing in this endeavor. The *Stimmungsbericht* in question discussed the November 15th, 1941 issue of the *Telegraaf* which depicted a photo of two sailors, who were publicly assumed to be the Queen and Crown Princess. In response, the *Wehrmacht* made the following claim: "Such reporting should be made impossible in the future. We do not need it, as it continues to shake trust in the truthfulness and honesty of German reporting and thus destroys what has been painstakingly built up."⁸²

⁸² Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 19, Januar 1942, p. 5

Figure 3: De Telegraaf, 15-11-1941 Morning Edition p. 4⁸³



The advice to censor this type of journalism in the future was motivated by the relationship between the occupier and the occupied population. This type of advice was not common in the *Stimmungsberichte*, which seems appropriate considering the extremely anti-German sentiment that was described by the *Wehrmacht* in every single *Stimmungsbericht*.

Orangeism

The desire for connection to the house of Orange speaks to the retention of loyalties that the Dutch population had for the Royal family, as every single copy of the issue of the *Telegraaf*, which supposedly depicted the Queen and Crown Princess, was sold out almost immediately, with resale values being recorded as high as 50 Fl. (about 350 Euros today).⁸⁴ This action falls into the first order framing, as the action to spend exorbitant amounts of money to feel connected to the royal family is a very salient admission of care for this aspect of the nation-state. This manifests as a repertoire of contention, because, by having displayed this ‘Orangeism’, the Dutch population was actively countering the structural desire of the *Reichskommissariat*. Namely, their policy on public or private reference to the house of Orange

⁸³ “Konvooi-Begeleiding,” *De Telegraaf*, November 15, 1941.

⁸⁴ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 19, 1942, p. 5

forbade any discursive or symbolic gesture of solidarity. Nevertheless, the events of that year had instilled some confidence in the Dutch population, as not only had the 6th army's capitulation at the Battle of Stalingrad in February handed the Germans their greatest defeat, the toppling of Benito Mussolini's government in July had also shortened the list of Germany's allies significantly. The perspective on the war was positive, but nevertheless, the immediate dangers of the war and occupation were as real as ever. Anglo-American air raids in late October had left 151 people dead, and many more injured in Enschede, and on November 4th, prominent figure J. Verlun was arrested and executed in early November.⁸⁵ A yearning for a connection to the familiarity of the Royal family was, therefore, to be expected.

Expression of solidarity with the Royal family extended further back into 1942. In the *Stimmungsbericht* for July of that year, it was noted that even those same people who openly condemned the evacuation of the Royals to London in 1940, now perceived the Queen as a martyr and saving grace barely two years later.⁸⁶ The report also noted that when these individuals were made aware of their contradictions, in discussion with other Dutch individuals, they confessed to the rashness of their earlier statements. These people rationalized their change of heart by claiming that, having been subjected to the German administrative government for two years, they now realized how good they had it before.⁸⁷ This yearning for the situation to return to 'normal' for the Dutch was here being transferred onto the symbol of the Queen. Not only was the German civil administration being shunned in its illegitimacy, both by an expressed desire to see its dissolution, but also through by disobeying the mandated illegality of Orangeist displays of any kind. Intentional or not, these statements are evidence of a heating nationalist attitude. The disobeying of these laws assign such statements to a first order framing of everyday nationalism, with the perceived martyrdom of the queen implying national solidarity with the head of state that the population perceived as legitimate. That we can draw into question whether these statements were intentionally made in reaction to laws supports the idea of competing nationalisms. If Dutch individuals unintentionally arrived at these topics of conversation and continued to discuss them in public, regardless of the repercussions, demonstrates a subconscious rejection of the legitimacy of the laws which made their statements illegal.

Further disregard for the structural changes to fundamental staples of the Dutch culture was also noted in August. Specifically, when discussing the events of August 5th, 1942, princess

⁸⁵ Liempt, *Leven in bezet Nederland 1940-1945*, 1175.

⁸⁶ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 25, 1942, p. 2

⁸⁷ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 25, Juli 1942, p. 2

Irene's birthday, the *Wehrmacht* reported festivity in a similar vein to the Anjerdag in 1940. This *Stimmungsbericht* notes widespread and intentional neglect for the *Reichskommissariat's* rules regarding the wearing of nationalistic symbols in public. In Alkmaar, people were wearing Orange flowers in buttonholes, and parade processions were seen forming in open carriage lanes in the way of a silent demonstration.⁸⁸ Moreover, in September too, the *Stimmungsbericht* reported several small-scale Orangeist actions. In Amersfoort for example, an organist played the tune of 'Lang zal ze Leven' (the Dutch variant of happy birthday) several times on the Queen's birthday. On the same day, in Gouda, a fireworks display was given in celebration, and in Leerdam the hospital placed orange flowers at the bedside of patients, reasoning that this helped the mood of the patients:

*„der Geburtstag der Königin ist in allgemeinen sang- und klanglos vorbeigegangen. In Amersfoort mußte man einen Drehorgelmann festsetzen, der seiner Sympathie für das Haus Oranien dadurch Ausdruck verlieh, daß er dauernd "Lang soll sie leben“ orgelte. In Gouda wurde durch Abbrennen von Feuerwerkskörpern und Gesang und Gejohle der Geburtstag Wilhelminehens gefeiert, und die Krankenhausverwaltung in Leerdam glaubte den Krankengeine besondere Freude dadurch zu machen, daß sie einen Strauß orangefarbener Blumen an jedes Bett stellen ließ.“*⁸⁹

[the Queen's birthday has passed without much commotion. In Amersfoort an organist had to be arrested, who expressed his sympathy for the House of Orange by constantly playing "Lang zal ze leven" on the organ. In Gouda, the birthday of Wilhelmina was celebrated by lighting fireworks and singing and hooting, and the hospital administration in Leerdam believed they made the sick people especially happy by having a bouquet of orange flowers placed by each bed.]

These actions can be classified as first-order frames of everyday nationalism, as the nation was being intentionally reproduced in these instances. However, more notable in these given examples was that while this behavior was not desirable, the perpetrators were not excessively punished. This informs a trend that categorically determined the intensity of the repertoires of

⁸⁸ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 26, September 1942, p. 3-4

⁸⁹ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 27, Oktober 1942, p. 4

contention that defined the everyday nationalism of the Dutch silent majority. Namely, that the Dutch people, despite their ideological and political motivations, still placed the utmost priority on self-preservation. This was likely enforced by the intimidation tactics of the *Wehrmacht*, which had ordered a combat fighter plane to circle over the largest cities in the country on Wilhelmina's Birthday.⁹⁰ The priority of self-preservation presented itself merely one year later in a *Stimmungsbericht* of October, in which a report was made on a Dutch underground propaganda newspaper, '*De Oranjekrant*', that had criticized the lack of a festivity around the Queen's birthday.⁹¹ The reason for this lack of festivity follows the priority of self-preservation, as the stalled armistice proceedings between the Allies and the Italian Badoglio government, in September 1943, dissuaded the prospect of an imminent liberation of the Netherlands. The outlook of an extended occupation pushed the hot nationalism of the Dutch population back into the private sphere. This assertion enforces the position of De Jong, who noted that the Dutch were particularly eager to jump on any opportunity to assume liberation as an imminent occurrence. It was so unbearable to imagine that the occupation would continue for several more years that the people adopted a hopeful attitude whenever good news about the Allied war effort was proliferated.⁹² It is noteworthy to consider that hope for a more prosperous future can be attached to sentiments of nationalism.

Inconvenience and Irritation as Repertoires of Contention

Due to the priority of self-preservation, disdain for the occupier was expressed in small ways that the SD frequently referred to as petty. Chris van der Heijden would have referred to these instances as '*verzetjes*'.⁹³ While the public loyalty to the head of state, and the Royal family overall, was definitively nationalistic, the bottom-up nationalism manifested in a new set of rules that governed ordinary life for Dutch people looking to remain just that, Dutch. In particular, the *Stimmungsbericht* of January 1942 refers to the petty spitefulness that dominated the Dutch people's interaction with the Germans. Signs to German institution's offices were being covered with tar. Tram drivers and bus drivers would regularly refuse entry to *Wehrmacht* members, or depart from stops while intentionally leaving behind members of the *Wehrmacht*. When this happened, it was reported that teenagers would pass members of the

⁹⁰ Liempt, *Leven in bezet Nederland 1940-1945*, 836–37.

⁹¹ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 10/43, Oktober 1943, p. 5

⁹² De Jong, *Het Koninkrijk Der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog Deel 5 Maart '41 - Juli '42*, 5:16.

⁹³ van der Heijden, *Grijs Verleden, Nederland En de Tweede Wereldoorlog*, 178.

Wehrmacht with a prepared repertoire of insults and anti-German songs.⁹⁴ All these examples of heated nationalism can be placed in the first order of everyday nationalist framing, as they clashed directly, and intentionally with the agents of the illegitimate state. The identification of such a repertoire of contention demonstrates how the occupation had impacted the experience of the nation-state in the everyday. In these cases, little acts of resistance were aimed at those that were considered unworthy of participating in Dutch society, as they were not Dutch. As such, the singing of songs, the choice to leave a uniformed *Wehrmacht* officer at the bus station, or making it impossible to find the offices of illegitimate German institutions, were all acts of everyday reaffirmation of the nation. Just not the German-occupied version of that nation.

This behavior continued through March of that same year. The *Stimmungsbericht* took notice of the persisting contentious behavior of the Dutch, referring to it as challenging and cheeky.⁹⁵ For example, the discontent with the use of public transport by the occupying force was again noted explicitly in the *Stimmungsbericht* for March. A bus driver on Texel, when refusing entry to German soldiers expanded his conceit by pointing to a heavily loaded *Wehrmacht* truck and suggested the platoon to sit atop the cargo. When the soldiers boarded the bus despite the driver's objections, the driver began to shout, only to eventually be silenced by a slap to his face. This driver had supposedly been making a habit out of this brand of contention, as the command office in Den Burg noted that he had been warned about it in the past.⁹⁶ Similar attitudes had also been reported on in Arnhem, where tram drivers, who noticed German uniforms at stops, would drive by without stopping or forced the Germans to sit at the back by bringing Dutch passengers to the front.⁹⁷ However, similarly to the cases discussed above, these cases were not contentious to such a degree as to warrant retribution significant enough to put the perpetrator's self-preservation in question. The bus driver was forced to accept the passengers and a slap to his face, and the tram drivers in Arnhem were asked to stop by the mayor at the behest of the *Wehrmacht* commander.⁹⁸ The *Stimmungsbericht* acknowledged that the German authorities actively counteracted the possibility of these actions becoming extreme enough to warrant arrests and that these acts of annoyance were but minor nudges by immature people.⁹⁹ Nevertheless, these first-order actions of everyday nationalism

⁹⁴ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 19, Januar 1942, p. 14

⁹⁵ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 21, März 1942, p. 5

⁹⁶ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 21, März 1942, p. 5-6

⁹⁷ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 21, März 1942, p. 6

⁹⁸ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 21, März 1942, p. 6

⁹⁹ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 21, März 1942, p. 5

served to demonstrate the Dutch perception of illegitimacy in regards to the German presence in their country. These actions, however, always balanced themselves with the consideration of self-preservation. In all the consulted *Stimmungsberichte* there were only marginal instances of an aggravator of this sort being reprimanded for their actions. Namely, the slap which the bus driver was forced to endure, and a tram conductor in Arnhem who was subjected to an unspecified punishment.¹⁰⁰ The line of what could be done to voice one's dislike for the occupier was being tested. This trend would continue through the entire occupation, continuously establishing repertoires of contention that were safe enough to avoid being arrested.

This assertion contests the assertions of Hein Klemann and Gerhard Hirschfeld. Klemann and Hirschfeld made a point of noting that those who were not prepared to run the risk of being arrested, and continued to live everyday lives were guilty of following the rules of the *Reichskommissariat* to the point of passive collaboration. This dynamic is much more complicated, as the shifting dynamics of nationalistic hopes for liberation, and self-preservation acted to either heat or cool nationalism in everyday actions.

This dynamic was exemplified further in May of 1942 when the *Wehrmacht's Stimmungsbericht* reported on the intentional neglect for conduct on trains. Specially reserved compartments for the *Wehrmacht*, on trains, were frequently being occupied by Dutch individuals, thereby forcing the *Wehrmacht* to stand. This is one of the few examples of a second-order framed action of everyday nationalism. This is however not universally the case as this action could have just as likely been taken for the sake of convenience, it could just as easily have been framed by the first order and be intended as an outward display of contention motivated by nationalism. Moreover, these compartments were also generally designated as 'no smoking' areas, to the chagrin of the *Wehrmacht*. These compartments frequently found themselves in the oldest and most rundown carriages on the trains, and cleaning of these areas was overlooked as standard.¹⁰¹ These acts were likely of a first-order frame, considering the previously established disdain for providing public transport to the Germans with any level of ease. These same complaints were still being mounted by the *Wehrmachtkommandantur* in August 1942, with particular notes being made about their uncleanliness.¹⁰² While no serious obstacles for the Germans were being created here, the creation of annoyances, by both the Dutch population and, more specifically, the institutions responsible for the organization of

¹⁰⁰ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 22, April 1942, p. 14

¹⁰¹ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 23, Mei 1942, p. 4

¹⁰² Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 26, September 1942, p. 10

train travel, these actions do inform intentional neglect for the structural changes being made by the *Reichskommissariat*. This neglect may also be equated to retribution, as the deportation of some two thousand career army officers in May of 1942 would have heavily impacted the Dutch perception of the German promise to allow the Netherlands to retain its autonomy.¹⁰³ The National Railway's delivery of the specially reserved compartments reserved for the *Wehrmacht* informs the desire to avoid direct conflict with the occupier. Nevertheless, the organized decision to deliver on this commission with the lowest possible quality serves to demonstrate the degree to which their compliance was out of a desire for self-preservation. Furthermore, the general public's disregard for the structural change informs the illegitimacy with which the rulings of the *Reichskommissariat* were perceived. The rules of train travel were not legitimate, and so they were neglected.

Another frequently notable repertoire of contention in the *Stimmungsberichte* was the lack of respect with which the Dutch greeted the *Wehrmacht* in public. This contentious repertoire was likely a remnant of the accepted national competencies from before the war. As such, this, much like the train example, could just as well have been a first or second-order frame. For example, The *Stimmungsbericht* for April 1942 reported on the bad greeting discipline of the Dutch *Maréchaussée* and Labor Service.¹⁰⁴ Whether the lack of greeting of these individuals manifested intentionally or not, the nationalistic expression that it communicated was universal. For example, in the *Stimmungsbericht* for February 1944 the *Wehrmacht* made a concrete connection between the noticeable repertoires of contention presented above, and the private sphere attitude observed before that point:

*“Die Haltung der niederländischen Bevölkerung gegenüber Angehörigen der Wehrmacht ist kühl—korrekt. Kleinigkeiten, wie widerwilliges Ausweichen. auf den Gehsteigen u.ä. lassen die innere Einstellung erkennen.”*¹⁰⁵

[The attitude of the Dutch towards the *Wehrmacht* is cool – correct. Little things like reluctant evasive action on the sidewalks, etc. reveal their inner attitude.]

We can gather from this that the daily interactions between the German occupiers served as a valuable source to determine the sentiment of the Dutch population. This is particularly

¹⁰³ Liempt, *Leven in bezet Nederland 1940-1945*, 835.

¹⁰⁴ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 22, 1942, p. 13

¹⁰⁵ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 2/44, Februar 1944, p. 3

noteworthy because the fact that the *Wehrmacht* felt the need to report on it demonstrates the desire that the Germans had to see the Netherlands become more Germanic. In Germany, it had been compulsory for citizens to greet military personnel with the customary ‘Hitler greeting’, since 1933.¹⁰⁶ Despite this, the lack of greeting in the Netherlands reflected animosity towards the Germans, thereby making it a noteworthy mention.

The same complaint was levied against the Dutch police force in Rotterdam in July of 1942.¹⁰⁷ This betrayed the private sphere disposition of the Dutch who worked in institutions that could not help but collaborate with the occupier. Up until this point, the *Stimmungsberichte* had made a point of noting the excellent relationship that the Germans shared with the Dutch police and Dutch authorities. However, reports of how the Dutch lacked proper greeting discipline were just the beginning. In February of 1943, the *Wehrmacht* levied the accusation that Dutch police were being intentionally passive in their jobs after failing to retrieve a single copy of an underground propaganda leaflet.¹⁰⁸ Similar criticism was levied again in October 1943, when discussing the Dutch police’s standardized intentional blindness to black market sales happening right under their noses.¹⁰⁹ This neglect supported the *Wehrmacht*’s suspicions that the Dutch police force was portraying correctness as a façade to avoid suspicion at turning a blind eye when it came to enforcing the *Reichskommissariat*’s new rules.¹¹⁰ These types of repertoires fall under a first-order frame, as, if we take the intentionality of the Dutch police force’s uselessness as an accurate description of the situation, this was being done to inhibit the occupier directly. This example also reinforces the assertion that the Dutch were heavily motivated by self-preservation, as the inhibition caused by their complacency, as well as the façade put on by these police officers acted to obscure their contentious behavior. However, it also denotes a distinct aversion to the illegitimate structural changes made by the *Reichskommissariat*, as these Dutch staffed institutions generally refused to accept and enforce them.

The vast majority of the population was, however, not affiliated with the institutions that became absorbed into the *Reichskommissariat*’s tools of the state. As such the repertoires used by the general public were much more proactive and provocative. In January 1943 the *Stimmungsbericht* reported on a particularly morbid display. A cemetery in Arnhem had been

¹⁰⁶ Ian Kershaw, *The “Hitler Myth”: Image and Reality in the Third Reich* (Oxford University Press, 2001), 60.

¹⁰⁷ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 25, 1942, p. 12

¹⁰⁸ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 2/43, Februar 1943, p. 10-11

¹⁰⁹ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 10/43, Oktober 1943, p. 6-7

¹¹⁰ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 10/43, Oktober 1943, p. 10

vandalized by the placement of several stolen signs from railway compartments over the entryways. These signs read “reserved for the German *Wehrmacht*”.¹¹¹ The actions, despite being symbolic, and offering no practical obstacles for the occupier, were becoming more openly contentious. Naturally, these types of hot nationalistic actions should be classified in first-order frames. The increase in confidence among the population may have been enforced by the news that Queen Wilhemina was entering talks regarding the Dutch Indies, which she announced on *Radio Oranje* in December 1942.¹¹² This was broadcast only shortly before the morbid reservation was made in the cemetery. The motivational capacity of anger is worth noting, as January 1943 also saw the rations of meat and dairy products decrease significantly. However, military success generally sparked hope in the population, as the increased allied bombing of German territory, gave the impression of faltering German power in the overall narrative of the war.¹¹³ The general Dutch population became less risk-averse in times of German military distress. In February of 1943, for example, following the retreat from Stalingrad, *Wehrmacht* headquarters were being sent letters conveying expectations of an imminent liberation. Furthermore, the *Wehrmacht* also reported the date “1918” having been graffitied onto bike paths, houses, fences, and *Wehrmacht* vehicles.¹¹⁴ This graffiti was in reference to the defeat the Germans had endured in the Great War. Graffiti like this was a relatively widespread occurrence during the occupation, as exemplified in figure 4.

¹¹¹ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 1/43, Januar 1943, p. 1

¹¹² Liempt, *Leven in bezet Nederland 1940-1945*, 838.

¹¹³ Hein A.M. Klemann, *Nederland 1938-198* (Amsterdam: Boom Uitgervers, 2002), 450; Gerhard Hirschfeld, *Nazi Rule and Dutch Collaboration: The Netherlands under German Occupation 1940-1945* (Oxford: Berg, 1988), 160.

¹¹⁴ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 2/43, Februar 1943, p. 1-2

Figure 4. Graffiti reading “Weg Moffen” written on the wall of a hallway in the Lyceum Baarn by Ernst Sillem, a 17-year-old student there.¹¹⁵



These more active representations of dissatisfaction with the occupier's presence were largely situationally dependent, as good news regarding the war against the Third Reich acted as a catalyst for contentious behavior. Another example of this was reported during May of 1942 when, after the Americans claimed victory in the Battle for the Coral Sea on May 8th, the Dutch proclivity for contention had spiked. The *Stimmungsbericht* for May of that year reported the following:

¹¹⁵ Unknown Photographer, Zijgang boven Lyceum Baarn, 1941, BeeldbankWO2, https://beeldbankwo2.nl/nl/beelden/detail/3a83b81c-025a-11e7-904b-d89d6717b464/media/f5f3e797-33f4-fdb9-838b-1adcb2f5d5a8?mode=detail&view=horizontal&rows=1&page=2102&fq%5B%5D=search_s_soort_beeld:%22Foto%22&fq%5B%5D=search_i_filter_period:%2219400000%20TO%2019450000%5D&fq%5B%5D=search_s_geonameid:%22Nederland%22&sort=random%7B1628689789064%7D%20asc&filterAction

“Zum jahrestag des Kriegsbeginns in Holland, dem 10. Mai, waren sämtliche Soldatengräber – ob Freund – ob feind – mit Blumen geschmückt. Am nächsten Tag waren von den deutschen Gräbern die Blumen entfernt und auf einem Grabstand eine leere Bierflasche. Man wollte offenbar dadurch zum Ausdruck bringen, dass der betreffende Soldat infolge Trunkenheit ums Leben gekommen sei.”¹¹⁶

[On the anniversary of the outbreak of war in Holland, May 10th, all soldiers' graves - whether friend or foe - were decorated with flowers. The next day, the flowers were removed from the German graves and an empty beer bottle was placed on a the gravesite. Apparently they wanted to express that the soldier in question had died as a result of drunkenness]

Bad news, however, tended to have the opposite effect, driving the contention out of action and into discourse and petty everyday nationalism. Nevertheless, The *Stimmungsberichte* continued to claim that the Dutch remained largely passive with no inclination of a serious rebellion, supposedly as a consequence of the threat of punishment.¹¹⁷

These acts of symbolism remained supplemented by more widespread and passive acts of inconvenience that could be interpreted as impulsive or emotionally motivated. For example, it became a frequent occurrence for German soldiers to be treated unkindly in shops. Recurrently, shop owners would lie to Germans, claiming that certain goods were out of stock, before turning and selling the previously requested goods to a Dutch individual. In general, members of the *Wehrmacht* were also being continuously harassed with ironic questions about when the war would be over.¹¹⁸ These examples were described as general occurrences in the *Stimmungsbericht* of February 1943. No specific instances were described, and no places or victims were mentioned. Thus, these repertoires of contention were likely widespread phenomena, and not isolated incidents. The other generalized examples given can, therefore, also be determined as widely adopted repertoires of contention. Notable examples included intentionally not leaving enough space for the approaching Germans to pass when walking on a sidewalk.¹¹⁹ The Dutch population had also been noted to have all but stopped reading Dutch

¹¹⁶ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 23, 1942, p. 3

¹¹⁷ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 1/43, Januar 1943, p. 2

¹¹⁸ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 2/43, Februar 1943, p. 3

¹¹⁹ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 23, 1942, p. 4

newspapers, as they were perceived, accurately, as “German Propaganda papers”.¹²⁰ In June of 1943, the *Stimmungsbericht* noted a myriad of new repertoires being employed by the Dutch. The catalyst for this sudden increase in ferocity was the collection of radio sets by the *Wehrmacht*. This seizure of property was generally referred to as “*Vergewaltigungen und Schikanen*” [Rape and Harassment] by the Dutch population, while they quietly accepted their fate, hoping, meanwhile: “*dass der Tag nicht mehr fern ist, an dem man den verhassten "Moffen" alles mit Zinsen heimzahlen kann*” [That the day is not far off that we can repay the Germans, with interest].¹²¹ The collection of radio sets was also actively deterred by simply providing a defective set to the collector and keeping the working set hidden.¹²² Undeniably, these expressive actions should be categorized as first-order frames, since the radios were largely being used to listen to *Radio Oranje*. In the same report, the *Wehrmacht* discussed the behavior of the Dutch on the roads. Noteworthy mentions of the reckless and challenging way in which the Dutch use their bicycles were described as follows:

*“Man kann nach den Berichten der verschiedenen Kommandanturen auch an dem Verhalten der Bevölkerung gegenüber Wehrmachtangehörigen bemerken, daß in Kürze Großes erwartet wird, Freches und heraus-forderndes Verhalten auf der Straße, eine unverschämte Fahrweise Vieler Radfahrer, die in rasendem Tempo so scharf auf Wehrmachtangehörige losbrausen, daß jeder Mensch einen Zusammenstoß erwartet, der dann aber im letzten Augenblick durch eine scharfe Wendung vermieden wird u.ä. beweisen, dass die Holländer das Ende der "Rottmoffen" nahe bevorstehend wähnen ”*¹²³

[According to the reports of the various commander posts, one can also see from the behavior of the population towards members of the *Wehrmacht* that great things are expected shortly by cheeky and challenging behavior on the street, an outrageous driving style of many cyclists who rush so hard at members of the *Wehrmacht* at breakneck speed that everyone expects a collision, which is then avoided at the last moment by a sharp turn, etc. prove that the Dutch think the end of the "Rottmoffen" is imminent]

¹²⁰ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 2/43, Februar 1943, p. 6

¹²¹ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 6/43, Juni 1943, p. 1

¹²² Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 6/43, Juni 1943, p. 2

¹²³ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 6/43, Juni 1943, p. 2-3

This sentiment was echoed furthermore through physical distancing. In busses, trams, and movie theaters, an active effort was made to avoid sitting next to Germans. At other times, the specially designated train compartments were frequently occupied by Dutch passengers hoping to prompt a response. The *Wehrmacht's* analysis of the situation determined that these individuals no longer feared punishment.¹²⁴ These acts of resistance share the general theme of neglect for the rules that the Germans had established, which is why the *Wehrmacht* felt the need to comment on them. This disregard was the result of a perceived lack of legitimacy, as previously established. The first order frames being contextually dependent on the recent policies imposed by the *Reichskommissariat*, as well as the specific targeting of the Germans in these actions serves to show that these contentious actions were nationally targeted.

However, to truly regard these acts as a nationalistic response to a state that was illegitimately imposing structural change, these repertoires of contention need to be seen as a reaction to specific German impositions. The best example of this was the confiscation of bicycles in July of 1942. This action, as explicitly claimed in the *Stimmungsbericht* for that month, was undertaken at the behest of the *Reichskommissariat* and the Dutch police force. The SD even referred to the nationalistic bond the Dutch share with their bicycles when writing:

*“Der Niederländer, der fast mit der "fiets" geboren wird, sieht in der Wegnahme derselben so ungefähr das Schlimmste, was ihn treffen konnte. Man versucht daher auch auf allen möglichen Wegen, sein Rad dem Zugriff zu entziehen.”*¹²⁵

[The Dutchman, who is almost born with the "fiets", sees the removal of it as roughly the worst thing that could have overcome him. Therefore, one tries in all possible ways to remove access to his bike]

This note in the *Stimmungsbericht* confirms the clash between bottom-up and top-down nationalism. The Dutch felt national solidarity in their love of bikes, and the German confiscation of them served to benefit not only the German Army but also the *Reichskommissariat's* goal of Germanicization. Permanent distance from such a symbol of the Dutch nation would certainly have made the Dutch people less Dutch. Structural changes like

¹²⁴ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 6/43, Juni 1943, p. 5-6

¹²⁵ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 25, 1942, p. 3

this, in Malesavic's theory, do after all take a long time to take hold, but once they have they are almost impossible to escape. This clash resulted in the Dutch developing a repertoire of contention that was both risk-averse and still managed to degrade the illegitimate governance. The *Stimmungsbericht* for July of 1942 noted that in response to the confiscation action, the Dutch began circulating a joke that read: "*Die Deutschen müssen die Räder haben, damit sie schneller flüchten können, wenn die Engländer kommen*" [The Germans need to have the bikes so that they can flee faster when the English arrive].¹²⁶ Furthermore, the Dutch also largely circumnavigated the loss of their bikes by handing in an old, trodden-down bike, and hiding their functional models away.¹²⁷ Again, the Dutch were complying with the bare minimum to stay safe. Naturally, these types of actions should be viewed as a first-order frame of everyday nationalism.

Despite the appearance of passive compliance, the *Wehrmacht* was definitively aware of the illegitimacy with which the Dutch viewed the *Reichskommissariat*. Or, utilizing their *Stimmungsberichte* as political tools, attempted to undermine the *Reichskommissariat*. In March of 1943, the *Stimmungsbericht* noted: "*Die Kluft zwischen weiten Kreisen der niederländischen Bevölkerung und den deutschen Dienststellen des RK wird immer größer und ist nicht mehr zu überbrücken*" [The gap between large sections of the Dutch population and the German *Reichskommissariat* offices is growing to such an extent that it can no longer be bridged].¹²⁸ This realization corresponded with the end of the Nazification and Germanicization processes as a serious endeavor. Namely because the same report made the following claim:

*"Die Entwicklung der letzten Wochen zwingt zu folgender, klarer Feststellung: Die niederländische Bevölkerung ist in ihrer überwiegenden Mehrheit nicht mehr "das germanische Brudervolk", sondern sie fühlt sich als ein zur Zeit leider noch zur Untätigkeit gezwungener Teil unserer Feinde. Die Fiktion der "befreundeten Niederlande" ist zu Ende. Der Holländer fand neuerdings den Mut zur Bildung einer Front gegen die Deutschen Regierungsmaßnahmen im Vertrauen auf die oft gemachte Erfahrung, daß Maßnahmen des Reichskommissars zurückgezogen wurden, wenn sich starker Protest regte."*¹²⁹

¹²⁶ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 25, 1942, p. 3

¹²⁷ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 25, 1942, p. 3

¹²⁸ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 3/43, März 1943, p. 2

¹²⁹ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 3/43, März 1943, p. 17

[The development of the last few weeks makes it necessary to make the following clear statement: the vast majority of the Dutch population is no longer "the Germanic fraternal people", but instead feels that part of our enemies is unfortunately still forced to inactivity at the moment. The fiction of the "friendly Netherlands" is over. The Dutchman recently found the courage to form a front against the German government measures, relying on the experience that he had often made that measures by the Reich Commissioner were withdrawn if there was strong protest]

It is possible, or even likely that these comments served, at least partly, to maintain the need for the *Wehrmacht's* presence in the Netherlands. However, based on the repertoires of contention observed by the *Wehrmacht* up to this point, this assertion cannot be viewed as a complete fabrication. The lack of nationalistic plasticity had at this interval becomes apparent due to the repeated disregard for the *Reichskommissariat's* policies. Lou de Jong affirmed this observation when claiming that despite the ease with which new regulation was introduced, many Dutch speakers and institutions responded by simply ignoring these new structures.¹³⁰ From this, we can also reaffirm the categorizations into phases that several authors, including Van der Boom, have made about the German occupation of the Netherlands, that this point of the occupation was the junction where the Germans became much more exploitative.¹³¹ We can see that the majority of the noteworthy repertoires were mainly reported on between 1942 and 1943.

Repertoires Focused Against the NSB

The underlying cause behind the repertoires of contention that the Dutch population adopted was, obviously, the imposition of an occupational government. Nevertheless, as the *Stimmungsberichte* highlight, the main recipients of the population's contentious actions were not the Germans. Without a doubt, the most hated group in the Netherlands during the occupation was the *Nationaal Socialistische Beweging* (NSB). The political party had been subject to a meteoric rise in popularity, directly followed by a catastrophic decline in the late

¹³⁰ De Jong, *Het Koninkrijk Der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog Deel 5 Maart '41 - Juli '42*, 5:336–54.

¹³¹ van der Boom, "We Leven Nog" *De Stemming in Bezet Nederland*, 135.

1930s.¹³² This seesaw pattern of ascending and declining popularity shaped before the breakout of the war and was heavily influenced by the increasing militarism and radicalism noticeable in the German variant of national socialism.¹³³ The NSB had consistently been aligning itself with the Nazis since 1937, and subsequently, the movement became the de facto ally for the Nazis in the Netherlands. This partnership was also reinforced by the Nazification goals of the *Reichskommissariat* in the Netherlands. This partnership however was never equal, as the value of their natural ally was extremely limited in the eyes of the Nazi occupier. The NSB was eventually made the only legal political party, and the Party leader, Anton Mussert, was given the right to call himself by the ceremonial title: the Leader of the Dutch people. However, the party was afforded little to no executive authority over the country outside of its internal politics. For example, when, in October 1942, *Reichskommissar* Seyss-Inquart visited Hitler, they discussed the possibility of naming Mussert as the Prime Minister of the Netherlands. Hitler, however, rejected this proposition out of hand.¹³⁴ This was likely because of the general public's hatred of Mussert and the NSB. Furthermore, it was established as standard practice that quarrelsome mayors were replaced by NSB members to maintain some level of national solidarity with the Dutch population. But these mayors served at the pleasure of the *Reichskommissariat*, and not the NSB.

The NSB had betrayed the legitimate government, for next to no gain. This is likely why the Dutch population felt such animosity towards the movement. This impression manifested in repertoires of contention that saw members of the NSB lose their place in the national social order. A prominent example of this was reported in April 1942, when the SD noted how the new mayor of Amersfoort, prominent NSB member J.G.L. Harlof, was unable to find housing, as nobody would rent to him.¹³⁵ Noticeable in this example is, firstly the first-order frame of nationalistic activity, as the trust between citizens had been severed based on their perceptions of an individual's loyalties, and their personal perceptions of legitimacy. After all, if the mayor had not been a member of the NSB, it is unlikely that this issue would have presented itself. The everyday nationalism that contextualized the everyday lives of people within this nation, as Fox proposes, had forked between members of the NSB and the rest of the Dutch population.¹³⁶ The inability to find lodging attests to this fact. When trying to reason

¹³² Gerrit Voerman and Paul Lucardie, "The Extreme Right in the Netherlands," *European Journal of Political Research* 22, no. 1 (1992): 36, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6765.1992.tb00304.x>.

¹³³ van der Heijden, *Grijs Verleden, Nederland En de Tweede Wereldoorlog*, 81.

¹³⁴ Liempt, *Leven in bezet Nederland 1940-1945*, 837.

¹³⁵ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 22, 1942, p. 3

¹³⁶ Fox, "The Edges of the Nation," 28.

as to why this shift towards incompatibility occurred, the main culprit can be found in the context.

When, before the war, the majority of the Dutch population perceived the government as legitimate the NSB was a dangerous movement of radicals. After the occupation began, the NSB was a traitorous movement of collaborators. Before the war, the entire Dutch population lived under the same structures of law and order. The *Reichskommissariat* endeavored to change the structural elements constituting the nation-state and thereby providing benefits to the collaborationists who accepted these changes, by appointing them to offices that did not correspond to their training or abilities. Indeed, this caused the NSB to be seen as a traitorous movement of collaborators. This was reflected in the repertoire with which the Dutch population discussed the appointment of NSB members to public office. Namely, in the *Stimmungsbericht* of November 1942, the SD reported on a joke that had been frequently told in and around the Amsterdam area. The joke read as follows:

“Amsterdam illustriert diese Einstellung mit nachstehendem Witz, der in der Bevölkerung kolportiert wird: "Zwei NSBer treffen sich in der Eisenbahn. Auf die Frage nach woher und wohin stellt es sich heraus, daß beide von einem „Bürgermeisterkursus" kommen. Es kommt dann zur Sprache, daß der eine nur 20,- hfl, Knusungebühren bezahlt, während der andere 40,- hfl. geben muß. Lange sucht man gemeinsam nach dem Grund für diese unterschiedliche Behandlung, bis dem einen endlich die Erleuchtung kommt und er ganz erleichtert feststellt : "Ja, dann hast Du Lesen und Schreiben dabei.””¹³⁷

[Amsterdam illustrates this attitude with the following joke, which is rumored among the population: "Two NSBers meet on the train. When asked where from and where to, it turns out that both come from a " mayor's course". It then comes up that one person only pays Hfl 20.-, while the other must pay Hfl 40. For a long time you look together for the reason for this different treatment, until one of them finally achieves enlightenment and he realizes with relief: "Yes, you must have reading and writing in your course.]

¹³⁷ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 29, November 1942, p. 4

Despite the exaggeration, the point remains clear. Ineptitude was the impression with which the Dutch people dismissed their new public officials. This further disconnected the relationship between the people and the illegitimate occupational government as local politics had stopped representing the best interests of the people, and thereby the ‘will of the nation’.

Of course, there were specific ideological considerations that further exacerbated the aversion to the NSB. Again in November 1942, a geography teacher in Arnhem, who was also a member of the NSB was sacked from his post because parents had complained that he was espousing NSB propaganda in his teaching and homework assignments. This first-order frame had exhibited ideologically-based nationalism in which the perception of legitimate national structure between NSB teacher and Dutch parents were evidently incompatible. However, the NSB was able to intervene, and subsequently appointed this same teacher as headmaster of the school. The response that this warranted was that parents simply kept their children from school and homeschooled them instead, leaving the newly appointed headmaster with no students.¹³⁸ This was a result of an aversion to national socialist ideology that the majority of the Dutch population did not want to see introduced into structures of national life like education. This corresponds to what Joshua Sanders claimed when looking at the *Reichskommissariat's* goals of Nazification and Germanicization in the occupier’s educational policy. Sanders specifically points out that the attempts to inculcate ideas of national socialism and the Greater Germanic Reich in impressionable Dutch youths were widely resisted.¹³⁹ However, the only changing variable was the ideological influence on the education program. Germanicization and Nazification became fundamental aims of the educational structure, and the prospect of this structural change formed a first-order frame, and subsequently sparked the aforementioned contentious actions. The parents’ choice can, therefore, be seen as a nationally influenced one, as it was the ideological structures of the legitimate Dutch nation-state being violated by dint of different ideological educational structures.

However, it is also noticeable that these actions did not prompt punishment from the occupier. This lack of retaliation was possible because of the relatively small scale of the NSB, and the small influence it had on national governance. The NSB was free game for repertoires of contention that were inculcated into the everyday lives of the Dutch population. As such it comes as no surprise that the NSB perceived the level of resistance in the Netherlands quite differently than the Germans. The NSB propagandists noted in 1942, that the country was one

¹³⁸ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 22, April 1942, p. 3

¹³⁹ Sander, “The Greater Germanic Reich: Education, Nazification, and the Creation of a New Dutch Identity in the Nazi-Occupied Netherlands,” v–vi.

massive force of resistance.¹⁴⁰ These repertoires were nationalistic in these instances because the NSB's influence was unshakably linked to the context of the occupation, and the changes this implied to the everyday lives of ordinary Dutch people.

Our Jews

One of the most representative expressions of everyday nationalism came alongside the increasingly severe persecution of the Jews. In May of 1942, the *Stimmungsbericht* noted that the persecution of the Jews had given rise to sympathy, which manifested in demonstrative behavior. This behavior was relatively par for the course in terms of the repertoires of contention mentioned before. No actions were taken in public to try and save the persecuted Jewish individuals from their newly degraded legal status. The occupier's response to the February 1941 strikes in demonstration of the Jewish treatment by the Nazis, which saw the first instances of execution in the occupation years, exemplified the German capacity to realize their monopoly over the 'legitimate use of force'.¹⁴¹ This strike has frequently been referred to as the first instance of a large resistance against the persecution of the Jews in Europe during the war, with approximately 300,000 people having participated. The reaction demonstrated the retaliation that the Nazis were capable of, and this drew the idea of self-preservation and personal safety into question. As such, public acts of solidarity were more akin to exaggerated friendliness. The *Wehrmacht* reported the increased proclivity to greet Jews with extraordinary politeness on the street, and people giving up their seats to Jews in trams. There were also reports of young boys and girls who sewed a Star of David onto their clothes in solidarity, putting themselves in extremely dangerous positions.¹⁴² These small acts of kindness were definitively the response to first-order frames which prompted Dutch men, women, and children to exhibit the lines of national solidarity that connected all true, loyal, Dutch people, regardless of religion or ancestry. The acts themselves were never putting anyone at risk of punishment but were nevertheless directly in opposition to the ruling of the occupying power.

These examples have shown that the majority of the Dutch population respected the authority of the German occupier exclusively when confronted with danger to one's personal safety. One

¹⁴⁰ De Jong, *Het Koninkrijk Der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog Deel 5 Maart '41 - Juli '42*, 5:240.

¹⁴¹ De Jong, *Het Koninkrijk Der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog Deel 4 Mei '40 - Maart '41*, 4:926–37.

¹⁴² Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 23, Mei 1942, p. 2-3

of the structural factors mentioned by Malesevic was the state monopoly on violence.¹⁴³ However, as established above, the nation-state generally functions peacefully due to the perceived legitimacy of the state in this capacity, by the nation. As such, Van der Boom's proposition that the Dutch people were largely looking out for number one can be confirmed to a degree. Relatively few people actively tried to sabotage the Germans to such a degree that would warrant punishment. Nevertheless, to claim that the Dutch population immediately forewent any semblance of national solidarity outside of individual hubs of micro-solidarity, like families, and friend groups, is a step too far. Nationalism was certainly expressed if perhaps the hot variants were only exposed behind closed doors, or in times of national euphoria. For example, following the surrender of the Italian forces, and the resignation of Benito Mussolini in September 1943, the country was reported to be in a state of ecstasy. Bottles of "oude Jenever" were being opened in street parties. This is particularly noteworthy as a first-order frame because of the national association with the drink of jenever, also called 'Dutch Courage' in the popular idiom. The 'Dutch Courage' was being opened as an intentional expression of national loyalty. Furthermore, in Amersfoort a Dutchman was reported to have told to a German soldier, "*Morgen stehe ich mit Deinem Gewehr auf Deinem Posten.*" [Tomorrow I'll be standing at your post, holding your rifle.] – although he likely said this in Dutch.¹⁴⁴ Examples like these demonstrate the power that national solidarity still had in influencing the behavior of national people. When the Dutch people experienced a stimulus that gave them hope at restoration, liberation, or victory, the priority of self-preservation became less monumental, and nationalism became more important.

General Discourse

Just as important as these actions in determining the extent to which nationalism expressed itself from below during the occupation, is the general discourse with which the population responded to structural changes as they presented themselves in everyday life. This discourse produced the primary evidence for the construction of the *Stimmungsberichte*. Given the prior-established dangers of expressing one's sentiments in action, the general discourse epitomizes the historically contingent perception of the situation, that views the Dutch as a deeply resistant people.

¹⁴³ Malesevic, *Nation-States and Nationalisms : Organization, Ideology and Solidarity*, 74.

¹⁴⁴ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 9/43, August 1943, p. 1-2

Firstly, the *Stimmungsberichte* frequently generalized trends in the discourse that the SD had noticed in the population. Often this was worded in ways that left the source of this conclusion ambiguous. The *Wehrmacht* also made frequent allusions to the conversation that Dutch people shared, thereby further expanding their source of information about the topics and trends that personified the interaction between members of the Dutch population. These trends can be categorized into six lines of general discourse. The first of these categories being those reports on the direct discourse of aversion against the occupying Germans. The second, closely related, type of discussion is the noticeable tendency of the Dutch population to spin every piece of news to the detriment of the Germans. Thirdly, the desire for liberation noticed in the Dutch population's discourse. Fourth was the analysis of the Dutch behavior that led the *Wehrmacht* to notice a desire for self-preservation in the Dutch population. Fifth, and again closely related to the former, was the discussion of the hatred towards the NSB. Lastly, the possibility that the Dutch population may have preferred a military occupation as opposed to the civil administration was also discussed at some length in the *Wehrmacht's Stimmungsberichte*. It is important to account for the agenda with which the *Wehrmacht* noted these specific discourses. This agenda can be summed up as a desire to stay in the Netherlands, considering the relative ease of safety that came with this deployment, while, at the same time trying to acquire the largest degree of power or autonomy from other Nazi institutions within this occupied territory. We can thus assume that some liberty was taken when reporting on the overheard conversations of Dutch men and women on the streets. Naturally, we cannot preclude that any of the reported opinions were never uttered in public, and thus observed by the *Wehrmacht*, but we should be critical in determining whether or not we should ascribe any representative quality to the phrases which were reported on.

The discourse with which the occupiers saw themselves greeted was consistently negative. Practically every *Stimmungsbericht* claimed two things about the Dutch impression of the Germans: primarily that the hatred of everything German was intensifying.; and secondly – and contradictory to the first point – the argument that the thermometer of Dutch anti-German sentiment, so to speak, had remained unchanged month-to-month. For instance, based on the report for March in 1942, in which the *Wehrmacht* claimed that the Dutch considered themselves to still be at war with the Germans, this combative sentiment was likely noticed by the Germans for the rest of the occupation.¹⁴⁵ This attitude, among the Dutch, expressed itself

¹⁴⁵ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 21, März 1942, p. 4

primarily in the desire to see the Germans leave.¹⁴⁶ For example, in May of 1942, the *Wehrmacht* noticed the Dutch referring to the occupiers as a “Nazi pest”.¹⁴⁷ Furthermore, the *Stimmungsberichte* in August of that same year reported on the eagerness of the Dutch to see dissension between German authorities, as this could be interpreted as a sign of the internal instability of the Nazi’s administration in the Netherlands, and therefore a sign of imminent collapse.¹⁴⁸

The Dutch desire for the collapse of the Nazi regime was reinforced by a craving for allied liberation. As the *Stimmungsbericht* for July 1942 noted, the general trend of discussion regarding the occupation, by the Dutch, saw a tangible desire for the English to invade. The *Stimmungsbericht* for July 1942 also took note that this discourse saw the occupation as nothing more than a short interval that was soon to give way to prosperity again.¹⁴⁹ The emphasis on a desire for English invasion may well be an indulgence of the *Wehrmacht*, as it strove to legitimate its presence in the Netherlands. Nevertheless, we cannot ignore the observable actions that this trend provoked in the Dutch. The example, of the Dutch man badgering a German soldier after the Italian surrender, provided above, is indicative of the same propensity towards nationalist expression in times of hope. The progress of the allied war effort remained a closely determinant factor in the Dutch expression of their nationalism in front of the Germans. In March of 1943, the *Wehrmacht* noted that as the eastern situation improved, the tangibility of the Dutch aversions cooled down:

“Mit der Besserung der Kriegslage auf dem östlichen Kriegsschauplatz ist eine gewisse Entspannung der äußeren Lage in den Niederlanden eingetreten. Es handelt sich dabei um eine Erscheinung, die sich immer wieder beobachten lässt. Der Niederländer ist ein kühler und nüchterner Rechner. Steht es nach seiner Meinung um Deutschlands militärische Macht schlecht, so tritt er aus seiner Zurückhaltung heraus und wagt etwas.”¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ This is indicative of the degree to which the *Wehrmacht* was manipulating the reports to push their own agenda, as this note directly contradicts the later observation that the Dutch population exclaimed a preference for military occupation.

¹⁴⁷ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 23, Mei 1942, p. 1-2

¹⁴⁸ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 26, September 1942, p. 3

¹⁴⁹ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 25, Juli 1942, p. 2

¹⁵⁰ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 3/43, März 1943, p. 1

[With the improvement of the war situation in the eastern theater of war, the external situation in the Netherlands eased to a certain extent. It is a phenomenon that can be observed again and again. The Dutchman is a cool and sober calculator. If, in his opinion, Germany's military power is in a bad way, he will step out of his reticence and risk something]

This same pattern was again reinforced in August of the same year. The respective *Stimmungsbericht* reported on the popular topics of conversation which informants had overheard on the streets. The topics in question were the resignation of Mussolini, the impending victory of the superior Anglo-American air forces, and the fighting in Sicily. The discourse with which these topics were being addressed led the *Wehrmacht* to claim that the prospect of imminent liberation “shines on people’s faces”.¹⁵¹ This was the very first note in that respective *Stimmungsbericht*, indicating that this type of discourse was widespread enough to be deemed important and allow for such generalized inference.

How the Dutch responded to news also illuminates a quintessential trend that the Dutch exhibited during the occupation. Namely, the Dutch tended to interpret every piece of news in a nationalistic way. This implied that every news story was spun in favor of the allies and the Queen, while also spinning it against the German occupiers. The *Wehrmacht* reported on this many times. For example, in April 1942 the *Wehrmacht* claimed that to the Dutch, the source of all misfortune in the Netherlands was the result of the German presence in their country. Specifically, this was in response to the loss of colonies to the Japanese, who were supposedly being enabled by the Germans who, in turn, kept the allied navies busy in the Atlantic.¹⁵² This is a telltale example of first-order framing causing the establishment of a repertoire of contention, as the occupational context prompted anti-German frames of interpretation which were expressed through the twisting of news in this fashion. How the Dutch population consumed newspapers, for example, demonstrates a rigid national framework. Specifically, in September 1943, the *Wehrmacht* reported the following:

“es ist bekannt, das der Holländer, wenn er schon die Zeitung liest, nur das ansieht, was sich irgendwie gegen Deutschland auswerten lässt. Alles andere, was

¹⁵¹ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 8/43, August 1943, p. 1

¹⁵² Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 22, April 1942, p. 2

vielleicht die deutsche Stellung erklären könnte, wird als "Goebbelspraatje" abgelehnt und nicht gelesen"¹⁵³

[It is well known that the Dutchman, when he is reading the newspaper, only looks at what can somehow be evaluated against Germany. Anything else that might explain the German position is rejected as "Goebbelspraatje" and is not read]

This type of vilification only intensified as the war continued and impediments began to encroach more and more on daily life. Most notably, the Dutch were reported to be accusing the Germans of exporting food to Germany in October 1942. Furthermore, the reactions to the deportation of workers to Germany were reported to be causing an enormous stir amongst the population. The splitting up of families was regarded as a malicious destruction of family communities.¹⁵⁴ This was also the impasse at which Van Der Boom argues that the scornful attitude towards the Germans began intensifying. Namely, Van Der Boom asserted that the policy that pushed the Dutch population into a choice between complacency and resistance was the '*arbeidsinzet*', which forced Dutch men to act as laborers for the Germans.¹⁵⁵ However, the narrative leading to this point demonstrates a standardized nationalistic response as these structural changes increasingly affected everyday life. To sum up, as we have established above, the general discourse of the Dutch population, which was easily overheard by the Germans was openly scornful but also expressed a clear desire for liberation. The vilification of the Germans, combined with a desire to see things return to normal, in reaction to these structural changes reflects the nationalistic repertoires of contention with which the Dutch armed themselves in everyday life. Even if these repertoires were specifically functional as tools to irritate, and not impede the Germans.

The self-imposed limits of these repertoires also inform the general tendency towards self-preservation that characterized the Dutch population's behavior during this period. This tendency also extended to the well-being of the 'homeland'. For example, In April 1942, the *Wehrmacht* reported a distinctive trend in the general discourse among the Dutch regarding the allied invasion of occupied Europe. Namely, the Dutch were becoming noticeably less inclined to the idea of allied landings in the Netherlands. This was because many appreciated the

¹⁵³ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 9/43, September, p. 5

¹⁵⁴ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 28, October 1942, p. 2

¹⁵⁵ van der Boom, "*We Leven Nog*" *De Stemming in Bezet Nederland*, 136.

prospect that “the homeland would not be ravaged a second time by the torch of war.”¹⁵⁶ In effect, this assertion implied a longer tenure under the occupational power in exchange for the protection of the individual's family and their native soil, for the Dutch. This too should be critically approached, however, as it is just as likely that the *Wehrmacht* took some liberties in constructing this argument. This biased assessment of evidence is made more plausible when the generalization of this sentiment, by the *Wehrmacht*, is considered. Namely, the *Wehrmacht* insinuated that this type of compromise was almost universal among the Dutch during the occupation. However, we must also consider the situation that prompted such an assessment. In the last days of April and the first days of May in 1943, the Dutch population felt a shock to their morale. The *Wehrmacht* had announced that all Dutch soldiers would be returning to captivity. The reaction of the Dutch people was understandably demonstrative, with strikes lasting until May 3rd. Another such shock occurred not long after, people who had been apprehended by the authorities during these strikes were sentenced to death not long after. These executions were carried out almost immediately. The *Wehrmacht* noted in the *Stimmungsbericht* for May 1943 that the Dutch perception of the occupational government as relatively weak and complacent had been snuffed out. The Germans had made it clear that the Dutch could not do anything they pleased.¹⁵⁷ This lesson resulted in a more risk-averse Dutch populace, as the executions acted to demonstrate the Germans' capacity to resort to violence. As the *Wehrmacht* noted later in the report:

“Der Holländer glaubte, mit der Langmut der Deutschen spielen zu dürfen. Von dieser Ansicht ist er bekehrt. Er wird im Ernstfalle nicht mehr so leicht zu unüberlegten Handlungen bereit sein. Er weiß jetzt es ist noch Krieg.”¹⁵⁸

[The Dutchman believed he could play with the long-suffering of the Germans. He is now converted from this view. In an emergency, he will no longer be so easily prepared to take rash actions. He now knows it's still war]

The threat of violence instigated these expressions of nationalism to retreat further into the private sphere. This reaction shows the degree to which nationalistic expression was impulsive

¹⁵⁶ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 22, April 1942, p. 15

¹⁵⁷ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 5/43, Mei 1943, p. 1

¹⁵⁸ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 5/43, Mei 1943, p. 14

and reactionary. This can almost be considered as an involuntary response, considering the previously established conscious tendencies towards self-preservation.

This priority naturally exhibited itself in different intensities during the occupation. The NSB, as a telling example, was reported to have likely owed its membership in October 1943 to the percentage of individuals with the proclivity to place one's own economic well-being ahead of idealistic convictions. In the *Stimmungsbericht* for October 1943, the *Wehrmacht* noted:

*“Die Haltung der NSBer ist uneinheitlich, Während es zweifellos in deren Reihen auch Idealisten geben wird, so ist die große Masse doch aus Konjunkturgründen der Bewegung beigetreten. Das ist die Ansicht der Holländer über die NSBer. Daß sie damit nicht ganz Unrecht haben, wird einerseits durch die große Zahl der Austritte bei ungünstiger werdender Kriegslage und andererseits durch des Verhalten sehr vieler NSBer in persönlichen Angelegenheiten bewiesen In Wohnungsfragen und in anderen, die persönlichen Interessen berührenden”*¹⁵⁹

[The attitude of the NSBers is inconsistent, while there will also be idealists in their ranks, the large masses have stepped into the movement for economic reasons. That is the view of the Dutch about the NSBer. That they are not entirely wrong with this is proven by the large number of withdrawals when the war situation deteriorates and, on the other hand, by the behavior of very many NSBers in personal matters, in questions of housing and in other matters affecting personal interests]

The personal benefits that opportunistic NSB members gained from their membership draws attention to the repertoires of contention that the *Wehrmacht* noticed in the rest of the population. A certain hierarchy of priority becomes apparent in this incongruity. The NSB members who joined for economic benefit placed a much higher value on self-preservation than on their loyalty to the nation-state. The inverse can be said as true for the rest of the Dutch population. This manifestation of different types of nationalism within the same nation-state indicates a notable dynamic in nationalism. Namely, the only general difference between members of the NSB and the majority of the Dutch population was the legitimacy with which

¹⁵⁹ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 10/43, Oktober 1943, p. 4

they perceived the exiled Dutch state. The legitimacy for said state moved on a spectrum in correlation to the value that any one individual placed on the structures of everyday life imposed by this state. The opportunistic NSB members did not care enough for this structure to risk angering the new German state, and their impositions, and thus accepted the changes to these structures. When the state is perceived as legitimate, then the populace can function, for personal benefit, within this system. A functional analogy can be made to a group of players playing a sport but disagreeing on the rules. Only when the rules are perceived as legitimate will the players who perceive it that way try and compete. It is natural in this instance to prefer the rules which cause you, as an individual the largest benefit. However, from the perspective of a group of players who perceive a different set of rules as legitimate, those who benefit from the supposedly illegitimate rules will naturally be shunned by those who carry this perception of illegitimacy.

Shunning of the NSB in general Dutch discourse is observed in the *Wehrmacht's* reports. A notable example can be found in the *Stimmungsbericht* from May 1943, which reported that “*Für alle Maßnahmen der deutschen Behörden werden die NSBer verantwortlich gemacht*” [The NSBers are held responsible for all measures taken by the German authorities].¹⁶⁰ This observable disdain implies two things on the part of the general Dutch perception. Firstly, that betrayal of the nation carried a much higher weight in the eyes of the people, than military superiority. Secondly, that the Dutch felt safe expressing their discontent vis-à-vis the situation when directed against the NSB. This satisfied their risk-averse attitude for self-preservation but equally acted as an outlet for everyday nationalism. For example, a consistent adage of conversation on the street, in December 1943, was reported as “*Lieber 10 Deutsche als 1 NSBer*” [rather 10 Germans than 1 NSBer].¹⁶¹ This type of expression can be seen as a first-order frame, and thus inherently nationalistic, as it motivated decisions that split families on ideological grounds. In the *Stimmungsbericht* for June 1943, the SD noted how whole families were being torn apart as a consequence of the ever-growing disdain for the NSB. This same report noted how a possible cause of this aversion could be attributed to the lack of freedom for self-determinate action that the NSB had achieved through its treachery. The report claimed:

¹⁶⁰ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 5/43, Mei 1943, p. 5

¹⁶¹ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 12/43, Dezember 1943, p. 4

“Die Gegensätze zwischen NSB und SS sind anscheinend auf höheren Befehl auf einer Versöhnungsversammlung vorläufig beigelegt, wo Mussert von allen Seiten Vertrauenserklärungen entgegengebracht wurden. Die NSB hat durch diese Vorgänge allerdings bei der Bevölkerung noch mehr verspielt. Man sieht in ihr nach wie vor eine Gesellschaft von Landesverrätern, die nach der Pfeife der Unterdrücker tanzen müsse.”¹⁶²

[The differences between NSB and SS are apparently temporarily settled by orders of higher-order at a reconciliation meeting, where Mussert was met by declarations of confidence from all sides. However, the NSB gambled away even more with the population through these processes. One still sees in it a society of traitors who must dance to the tune of the oppressors]

This example shows that, as the NSB became more attached to the Nazi administration, the Dutch population can be seen to have stripped the institution and its members of an ever-increasing amount of its national solidarity. They were now clearly traitors, puppets, and worthy of admonishment, as the examples above demonstrate. This decidedly nationalist claim shows, one of the fundamental catalysts for Dutch nationalistic repertoires was frustration at the prospect of the loss of self-determination.

The Wehrmacht can be seen to have arbitrated this fear for its own benefit as well. The illegitimacy of the *Reichskommissariat* led to the public expression of everyday nationalism in response to structural changes. The only reason that these repertoires of contention were possible, according to the *Wehrmacht*, was because the occupation was of a civil and not military nature. As such, the *Wehrmacht* noted the problems caused by the civil administration among the Dutch population many times. For example, in March 1943, the following was reported in that month's *Stimmungsbericht*:

“Der Widerstand des holländischen Volkes richtet sich nicht so sehr gegen die kriegsmaßnahmen der Wehrmacht als gegen die Maßnahmen der zivilen Regierung und gegen die Unterstützung der NSB. Die Zuspitzung der inneren

¹⁶² Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 6/43, Juni 1943, p. 5

Lage ist also in der Hauptsache durch die Maßnahmen des zivilen Sektors hervorgerufen.”¹⁶³

[The resistance of the Dutch people is directed not so much against the war measures of the *Wehrmacht* as against the measures of the civilian government and against the support of the NSB. The worsening of the internal situation is thus mainly caused by the measures taken by the civilian sector]

This sentiment was reinforced in January of 1944, when the *Wehrmacht* claimed that the German civil administration received heavy criticism from the population, and that “*die deutsche Zivilverwaltung wird stark kritisiert. (...) Man wünscht sich eine Militärverwaltung*” [the German civil administration is being heavily criticized (...) people wish for a military administration].¹⁶⁴ Moreover, one month later it was noted that:

*“Immer wieder kann man von den Holländern hören, dass die deutsche Hilfstellung für die NSB alle Möglichkeiten einer Zusammenarbeit zwischen Deutschland und dem holländischen Volk zunichte gemacht habe. Eine reine Militärverwaltung sei den Holländern am sympathischsten.”*¹⁶⁵

[Again and again one can hear from the Dutch that the German assistance for the NSB has ruined all possibilities for cooperation between Germany and the Dutch people. A pure military administration is most sympathetic to the Dutch]

The reasoning for this was that a military administration would not maintain its authority on the pretense of legitimacy, thereby shifting the majority of the priority for the occupied population to self-preservation. This clearly demonstrates the agenda of the *Wehrmacht*. Nevertheless, the fact that this was the strategy with which they intended to achieve it displays a discerning of the nationalist dynamics at play in the Dutch actions taken in day-to-day life during the occupation.

¹⁶³ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 3/43, März 1943, p. 16-17

¹⁶⁴ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 1/44, Januar 1944, p. 4

¹⁶⁵ Feldkommandantur 724: Lage- und Stimmungsbericht no. 2/44, Februar 1944, p. 4

Chapter 4: Conclusion

In conclusion, considering the consistent first order framing of the majority of the events discussed in the *Stimmungsberichte*, we can claim that the evident disdain against German occupying forces and the subsequent failure of the Nazification and Germanicization aims of the *Reichskommissariat*, were a result of nationalism. The resilient nature of this underlying nationalistic sentiment meant that the Nazification and Germanicization efforts of the Nazis were not given ample consideration or time on the part of the population to become engrained as legitimate in the national routine. As such, these efforts remained foreign, and they provoked repertoires of contention to span from the nationalist motivation of the Dutch population.

The extent to which we can claim this, however, remains contingent on how we define nationalism. To avoid the diametric 'goed' vs 'fout' narrative which has dominated much of this subject historiography, this project was based on the fact that nationalism affects the ordinary people and thus we should look at nationalism from below. However, this focus implied that we had to establish a methodology that could overcome the evidence problem inherent in studying intrinsic motivations in societies. To do this, we adopted Sinisa Malesavic's model of nations and nationalism, which sees national structures as fundamental in determining the national competencies that shape nationalism from below. From here we could look at instances when subconsciously accepted national routine was breached and made salient. However, because in the context of the occupation, and thus under the executive authority of a foreign nation's civil administration, this national routine was in a state of constant breach. Because the state was no longer Dutch, the national context of the Dutch people implied that actions were always in reaction to this national breach.

Nationalism on the part of an occupied population has largely been dismissed as obvious, considering the diametric nature with which occupational history has frequently been addressed. However, nationalism is more dynamic than this, and outwardly nationalistic expressions in small percentages of the population have less agency than the subconscious, or less extravagantly expressed nationalistic sentiment of the vast majority of the population. In the Dutch case, the immediate postwar good versus bad narrative obscured the varying nationalistic sentiments of this silent majority. However, the value of evaluating the dynamics of nationalism as it manifests in this silent majority is enormous, considering the agency of this 90 per cent majority of the population. With the occupational civil administration's goals of Germanicization and Nazification in mind, it was the nationalistic sentiment and ideological rigidity of this majority that was responsible for the failure of the Nazi grand plan for European

ideological domination. The widespread repertoires of contention discerned by addressing the source material demonstrate how this can be claimed. Namely that because these contentious actions were nationalistically motivated, and the majority of the population shared in these motivations, the underlying nationalistic motivation also acted as ideological rigidity against the Nazification and Germanicization processes. Using nationalism as an analytical lens in this instance allowed us to evaluate the dynamics by which nationalism manifested by offering a new interpretation to the established source material. Namely, by analyzing the interactions between the German occupier and the Dutch population in terms of the actions of the Dutch population, as reported in the *Wehrmacht's Stimmungsberichte*, in terms of competing nationalism we could gain an understanding of the motivations behind the daily activities of the majority of the Dutch population.

Because the goals of Nazification and Germanicization were intended to be reached gradually through structural changes, the Dutch reactions to these structural changes can be seen as bottom-up nationalism competing with top-down impositions. This only left the question of how to recognize these reactions as bottom-up manifestations of nationalism? It was in the ordinary Dutch man or woman's experience of the nation in the everyday structures that these reactions became salient. The established national competencies, with which these individuals navigated national structures before the war, were now incongruent with the structures imposed by the *Reichskommssariat*. Examples like the neglect for rules on public transport, disregard of proper greeting discipline on the street, and demonstrative actions like the covering of street signs with tar, or the graffitiing of walls and pavements demonstrate this deep sense of incongruity. As such, the actions of the ordinary Dutch people in this next context serve as evidence of their experience of the nation. This is, of course, not a new assertion in history writing on this topic. De Jong, among others, has made the nationalist implications of the Dutch sentiment during the occupation very apparent. However, by using everyday nationalism as an analytical tool, this situation became framed as a reaction to gradual changes in everyday life which were perceived as illegitimate. These dynamic repertoires of contention acted to explain, at least to some degree why nationalism manifested in passive resistances, and subsequently why ideological recalibration failed in the Netherlands.

The concept of everyday nationalism addresses the problem of differentiating between hot, cold, and banal nationalism. By looking at hot, cold, and banal nationalism as points on a scale of everyday experience that takes place in a national context, differentiating between hot, cold, and banal becomes more descriptive than analytical. Knowing whether a certain action was hot, cold, or banal nationalism is a descriptive pursuit after all. As such, studying the

nuances of the context through which hot, cold, or banal nationalism manifests is more functional in understanding how nationalism impacts everyday life. Everyday nationalism addresses all these varying temperatures simultaneously by recognizing the dynamic variability of salient national experience in everyday life. We can claim these are national experiences because every action that occurs within the structures of a nation-state is, to some degree, a national experience. Thus we can interpret these expressions through their causal contexts or frames. We categorized these frames according to Hearn and Antonsich's three orders of salience. Through these orders, we categorized the temperature and motivations behind the nationalist expression, and established empirically reinforced hypotheses about the sentiments and subsequent actions of the majority of the Dutch population.

This is where the primary value lies in re-addressing this case study. Many of the conclusions that arose from the analysis, in regards to the dynamics of Dutch sentiment and action have been elicited before. This case study does set a precedence for establishing that nationalism from below continues to exhibit salience even when the supposedly legitimate state does not carry executive power over the nation.

The largest challenge facing this research project has been the issue of the observability of intrinsic motivations and sentiments in general, in historical sources. This evidence problem in research on the history of the occupation has previously been addressed by approaching ego-documents. These endeavors gave rise to several pitfalls. However, the most important reason that they were not valid for this study was that the intentions of the authors and their respective backgrounds meant that we could not accurately gauge the biases at play. As a result, their value in gaining a degree of verifiability in reporting on specific actions was limited in comparison to the *Stimmungsberichte*. Because this research project addressed the nationalist sentiments of ordinary Dutch men and women in everyday life through the frames by which the nationalism which motivated their actions became salient, the source corpus did not need to address the sentiments directly, but rather the context which provoked nationalist expression. As such, we needed to establish sources that could act as a ledger of widespread actions perpetrated by ordinary Dutch individuals. The *Stimmungsberichte* were a natural choice for these requirements, considering of course the institutional bias with which these reports were written.

The analysis of these sources demonstrated that the majority of the Dutch population was decidedly anti-German during the occupational period. Furthermore, the actions discerned by the *Wehrmacht* evidence widespread nationalistic motivations, considering the contextual framing in which these actions took place. This nationalism acted to oppose the German

attempts at ideological and nationalistic recalibration. The structural changes imposed by the *Reichskommissariat* functioned only as contextual stimuli which pushed the pre-existing nationalism into the first order frames of everyday nationalism, and thereby into the public sphere. The gradual increase of the impact which these structural changes impacted the context of everyday life in the Netherlands meant that the repertoires of contention became more dynamic as the occupation went on. This dynamism exhibited itself in several ways.

When the *Reichskommissariat* attempted to foster better relations with the Dutch population, and thereby establish legitimacy, it only enforced the proclivity of the Dutch population to side with the narratives established by the allies. This eventually caused the Dutch population to disregard any and all news that was being proliferated by German affiliated institutions. This cultivated sentiment essentially disarmed the propaganda machine on which the Nazis had relied so heavily in their indoctrination of the German people in the 1930s.

Furthermore, the *Reichskommissariat* forbade any expression of loyalty to the exiled Queen and her family. The fact that these expressions occurred nonetheless demonstrated that the structures of this illegitimate state did not align with the Dutch experience of the nation. Moreover, though, the impediments to the regular celebration of the royal family caused the establishment of new contentious repertoires, like the wearing of certain flowers on nationally significant days, that manifested in the public sphere. The only way in which the *Reichskommissariat* was able to quash this nationalism was by threatening violent intervention. A trend which they came to rely on more and more as these repertoires developed further.

By far the most notable repertoire with which the Dutch population armed themselves against the German recalibration efforts was through the petty acts of irritation and inconveniencing of the German occupier. These types of everyday nationalistic expressions manifested in small innocuous that seemed inconsequential, but that were nevertheless salient displays of discontent with the *Reichskommissariat's* national structures. Specifically, these small acts of resistance openly displayed the disregard for the imposed structures. By virtue of not being punished for these indiscretions, however, the nationalism of the majority of the Dutch population practically made these structures ineffective in achieving the goals of Nazification and Germanicization. Again, it was the threat of violence or extended occupation that caused this nationalism to be pushed back into the private sphere. This illuminates a strong and important dichotomy in the history of nationalism and sentiment in occupational history. Namely, the negative correlation between nationalism from below and the inclination towards self-preservation.

This same relationship was observed in the repertoires of contention that responded to the persecution of Dutch Jews. The shared national competencies between the sub-categories of Dutch Jews and the rest of the silent majority implied that when illegitimate structural changes began impeding the value of these legitimate national competencies both categories experienced increased groupness. However, when the Jews started experiencing an increased structural impediment, we noticed a repertoire of contention form among the silent majority, in an attempt to show solidarity. This was, however still limited by the threat to personal safety.

Moreover, the general discourse reported on by the *Wehrmacht* demonstrated the same correlation. A catalog of derogatory jokes and public attempts at humiliation were reported on in times of hope. And then in times of despair, these same expressions retreated into more private musings.

The only sphere in which this was not explicitly noticeable was regarding the NSB. Because the NSB did not have access to executive authority, they also bore the brunt of the unimpeded repertoires of contention resulting from the nationalism of the Dutch population. Because the institution did not possess the manpower, nor the authority to employ force to ensure compliance, the dynamic priority of self-preservation relative to nationalist expression could not be observed. As such, we can identify the differentiating conceptual framework of competing nationalisms within the same nation-state.

To address the hypothesis of this research more directly, it is worth reiterating that by virtue of ideological rigidity, owing to nationalist persuasion on the part of the Dutch population, kept the Dutch from permitting any form of national recalibration like Nazification and Germanicization. This, however, becomes evident as we address the everyday nationalism of the Dutch population. The most telling patterns which unveiled themselves through this research generally concern the more holistic representation of a nation of millions of people during a period of occupation. In particular, the negative correlation between nationalism from below and self-preservation permits a more in-depth representation of this period in the Netherlands. Essentially, the sources demonstrate that whenever the threat of continued occupation or personal harm was high, that nationalistic expression retreated into the private, subconscious sphere. On the other hand, whenever the war appeared to be ending, or the threat to personal safety was low, that expression of nationalism rose accordingly in the public sphere. This conclusion confirms the assertion that, for lack of a better word, cowardice, acted as the limiting factor of active resistance to the occupation, just as it did in the context of the

persecution of the Jews.¹⁶⁶ This confirmation implies that this analytical framework can indeed confirm the well-established dynamics of sentiment. However, it also shows that it permits a deeper understanding of the motivational dynamic implicit in nationalism from below. This dynamic sees nationalism and personal safety as juxtaposed points on a scale of motivation, and not ideal types. Instances in which nationalism completely eclipsed one's regard for personal safety and vice versa were not found in the vast majority of the population. We can see the influence that this had on the narrative of the German occupation of the Netherlands. As mentioned above, the realization that the Nazification and Germanicization policies were not going to be successful had become evident by mid-1943. As such the policies of the Germans became far more exploitative, and the nationalism of the Dutch silent majority was forced into the private sphere. With this conclusion in mind, the dynamic reality of a population which exists at a permanent impasse of contentious nationalism and self-preservation shows the consistent consideration of contentious nationalism as a priority among the populace. The heating and cooling of its manifestation were, as evidenced in this research, the result of contextual interaction with national structures. As such, we can functionally conclude that the population's animosity towards the *Reichskommissariat* and its policies were at least significantly the result of underlying nationalism. Therefore, because we have shown that this nationalism was contentious in nature when it was salient, we can reasonably assume that this nationalism was also contentious when it was not salient. By showing that the first order frames of everyday nationalism manifested in hotter repertoires of contention, we can reason that the second and third-order frames carried the same underlying stubbornness, or rigidity in terms of their perception of ideological, political, and national legitimacy. It was this rigidity that acted to resist the mass success of Nazification and Germanicization, and thus we can claim that nationalism was responsible for the failure of these goals.

To more directly address the research question, the structural changes which prompted these repertoires of contention should be viewed as first order frames of everyday nationalism. As such, how these structural impositions impacted the everyday nationalism of the population can be described as an increase in motivation to act on nationalist sentiment. This motivation, as this analysis has shown was primarily limited by the increased priority of self-preservation. While this dynamic differed between every individual man, woman, and child in the Netherlands during the occupation, the overall trend remains valid. That when faced with a threat to personal safety, the motivational strength of nationalism faltered.

¹⁶⁶ van der Boom, "We Leven Nog" *De Stemming in Bezet Nederland*, 54.

This research project served as proof of concept for the methodological framework which allows us to address the evidence problem inherent in studies of nationalism from below. By addressing repertoires of contention that arise out of incongruence between the structures of the state, and the everyday nationalism of the population, we can see a part of the subconscious experience of the nation-state become salient. This methodological lens has value for future research into nationalism. It is, however, dependent on the presence of such incongruence.

The reliance on certain types of sources, on the other hand, implies that this methodology has significant value in the assessment of historical cases of nationalism in nations that experienced occupation. In particular, the Second World War examples are ripe for future research into nationalism from below, considering that *Stimmungsberichte* were widespread in Nazi institutions in all western occupied nations, and similar *Stimmungsberichte* are available for perusal.

Due to the scope of this project, we have also had to exclude some other dynamics of competing nationalism in the occupied Netherlands. While the *Stimmungsberichte* which were analyzed to arrive at these conclusions were substantial, this source corpus has not addressed all there is to see. As such, future research should focus on a more holistic analysis of the available source material. This quantity was insurmountable in a project of this size, but this proof of concept has opened the door for further analysis. Namely, as noted above, the competing nationalism of the silent majority and the NSB was also explicitly salient during this period. There is enough source material here for a research project all of its own. The repertoires with which these two variants of nationalism competed for legitimacy would contribute to filling out the new narrative of the occupation which is dedicated to preventing methodological nationalism and presentism.

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Figures

Figure 1:

Cino, G.H. Photographer. “212363”, Photograph. Gemeente Purmerend: NSB Volk en Vaderland, March 1944. *BeeldbankWO2*.

<https://beeldbankwo2.nl/nl/beelden/detail/fd5bc3a2-025a-11e7-904b-d89d6717b464/media/0b4e619b-1719-2d9e-24a3-de206d8d14c8> (13/09/2021)

Figure 2:

C.N.F. Photographer. “33113”, Photograph, Gemeente Schagen: NIOD, March 1943.

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Figure 3:

“Konvooi-Begeleiding,” *De Telegraaf*, November 15, 1941.

Figure 4:

Unknown. Photographer. “85867”, Photograph, Baarn: n.d. January 1941. *BeeldbankWO2*.

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