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The German goal for Norway 1940.

A historiographic study and analysis on the literature from 1955 to 2016.

Bachelor's project in Bachelor's thesis in History

Supervisor: Karl Erik Haug

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Foreword:

I wish to personally thank Karl Erik Haug for the digital solutions to our meetings and the extraordinary patience he has given me. It's been an absolute pleasure to be able to learn and receive feedback from his guidance and I appreciate the considerable time he gave to me through the process of this thesis.

The writer of this B.A. assignment is proficient, to a varying degree, in five different languages. The most applicable in our case is English, German, Norwegian and to a lesser extent French. Our topic has the misfortune to be a relatively well researched yet an obscure World War 2 subject. The works that have examined the topic, have been written in different languages, styles, and time periods. It's not an attempt to impress, as reasons are simply having been raised in Luxembourg and been forced to learn the respective languages, but the reason for mentioning this is because of a wish to use the knowledge to give the reader a possible interesting take on the topic with differing outlook. The references picked are also a combination of books and other works recommended when enquiring about the topic with various experts in the field. Therefore a special thanks goes to Karl Erik Haug, Gunnar D. Hatlehol, and Thorgeir E. Sæveraas for sharing their knowledge and contributing with free access to their work.

All the authors mentioned, and their respective work symbolises great progress into a potential answer for the future. It is with great optimism, to see the process of finding the final answer by these individuals throughout the years. The criticism I have given in this B.A. thesis to some of the parts of their work should by no means diminish their extensive dedication and expertise in the field, or be interpreted to be an attempt to be judgemental. I wish to note that all writers and authors mentioned in this text are all more knowledgeable and trustable, and agree that the story of Weserübung is unfinished and there is at this point yet to be a final conclusion. Great care has been made to ensure that the information presented is correct, yet any errors or inconsistencies this text may and probably will contain is the sole responsibility and fault of this student.

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1. Introduction

On April 9th, the neutral country of Norway was plunged into war. Across Norway there are reports of enemy warships entering restricted areas and Oscarsborg reports sinking a heavy cruiser entering the Oslo fjord. The surprise attack was so confusing to the Norwegians, that when King Håkon VII was briefed he remarked “Against whom?”.¹ The attackers were the German Wehrmacht, who at the end of the hectic day had virtually captured all major ports and cities, save from Oslo. The government of Norway had been grappling with repeated violations from both sides, but now the situation was clear, they were going to war. Yet a prevalent question remained, why were the Germans here and what is it that they want to achieve?

This thesis serves to analyse the reasons and intentions of the German occupation of Norway during the Second World War. This is a historiographic text which will take into account what various authors have written about this question. Why did Germany invade Norway? The intention for this text is to educate and gradually make this a surmountable question for regular people. The goal is to present a measured response, complete with sub-theories, sub-questions and comparisons. Figuring a clear cut answer has been a debate and point of contention for several decades, as primary sources can be hard to come by and witness’ accounts can be diluted, misremembered or embellished. This text will be split into several segments, highlighting the most accepted theories, together with my own analysis, before giving a considered answer to the question.

I’d first wish to state the obvious. Politics and war go hand in hand, therefore its safe to say that when it comes to anything Second World War there is much that has been written and covered in most aspects. Most revisions only occur when sufficient primary sources exist to warrant a change in historical perspective. This endless interest in the Second World War has had an effect of higher scrutinizing than other periods in human history. Yet as with other things in life there are some aspects that have higher interests than others, and one of those specific aspects is the Nordic theater. Sometimes called “The Forgotten Front”, it has the tendency to be overlooked in importance in relation to the war, and depending on one’s

¹ Lunde, H. (2009). *Hitler's pre-emptive war : The battle for Norway, 1940*. Havertown, Pa: Casemate. 220-223

opinion, it can be warranted. To the Danes and Norwegians it is called “The Occupation Period” or simply just as “The War”, but as we will see later, it had a lasting impression on contemporary writing about this period.

1.1. Method, Sources, and source selection

1.1.1. Thesis question

The issues we will present are the following: What are the main theories behind the German planning of the invasion of Norway? How do the various theories scrutinize and contextualize each other? Finally, is there an ideal answer? For us to achieve a concrete answer to our question on the topic we will first have to answer: **What** literature exist about the invasion? - and- **How** does the litterature present their view?

1.1.2. Method

The method we will use is a historiographic analysis on the various works that will be presented. As we will explore further down, much of the primary sources that represent and connect to this thesis are lost, either by destruction, or by unexplained loss because of the chaos of the war’s end. Therefore it will mostly be a secondary literature analysis, which reflects the difficulty of researching this topic, although in our conclusion there will be some major primary sources that will be used. In the first part we will highlight the major works of this topic, and discuss which works throughout the past decades have been most used or most relevant when discussing the prelude of the attack on Norway, while in the second part we present the contents of these works and give a short conclusion to each theory. Lastly, I will give a conclusion to the question of causality for the different perceptions and his opinions on the matter.

1.1.3. Source selection

Secondary sources that were chosen for this bachelor thesis were picked to represent differing opinions from various time spans. It was chosen to catch various movements of the continued effort to find the most absolute and correct aspects from this period. For each book or article that has been written since the war, each secondary source mentioned here has inevitably added and influenced itself to bring new knowledge or understanding within the field. Those aspects are what will define this text and is what this writer will try to bring into view and present in the most honest approach possible. We will analyze two older works and two

modern ones. In this way we can confidently consider how perception has evolved since the end of the war. The reasons for exactly each piece is two fold. Firstly, the choices that were considered had all varying degrees of academic writing, and picking “easier” modern books will help us to properly see the difference in today’s understanding. Secondly these works were acquired through reading and analyzing various books and articles’ recommended reading, or through inspecting footnotes, source material and bibliography that reference relevant information. Those sections are of course the most relevant, as it has taught the writer of this text what has been the most relevant authors to include.

Hubatsch was a natural pick for this thesis as he was a pioneer in collecting primary sources and beginning the research into Operation “Weserübung”. Gemzell works in the same way, he is a highly referenced and respected historian, and any thesis that does not include him would fall amiss. Lunde’s book tries to take an equal view from both sides of the war, and I saw it as a good pick when considering the nuanced views of today. Nøkleby is a modern example which is interesting to include. It should be noted that Nøkleby’s book is not a conventional pick considering that Skodvin would have been a more objective pick, or one of his students like Ole Kristian Grimnes, but the structure of this thesis wishes to have two older and two newer works to review. In conversation with Gunnar D. Hatlehol, he mentions that there are weaknesses in her book. The largest issue is the lack of analytics, but from what I’ve read this has not been an issue with her other works. Yet, it does give a simple, but crude representation of modern Norwegian perspective. It should also be noted that due to the deficiency of primary sources, almost all literature for this topic is built upon Hubatsch’s preliminary work in the field, and this also goes for Gemzell, Lunde, and Nøkleby’s case.

1.1.4. Major works

Arguably the most authoritative reference was published also in 1952, yet it should be noted the most used is the revised 1960 edition, which was authored by leading historian and professor of Kiel, Walther Hubatsch. His book *Die deutsche Besetzung von Dänemark und Norwegen 1940*, released in German, is an impressive tome which has an extensive part of it dedicated to highlighting transcriptions and direct sources. His provenance comes by having exclusive access to various interviews, diaries and well researched documents, which has helped it to become one of the most referenced historians for this period (if not the most), and

is today arguably still the most extensive volume in sources to date.² Hubatsch was unlike other German writers and historians after the war, not directly involved with the operation, and was himself an officer in the German Army during the war.³ The same year, Thomas K. Derry published his book *The campaign in Norway* in 1952. An individual who had a unique insight and active role as chief intelligence officer for Scandinavia during the war. His book became the official British military history for the Norwegian campaign.⁴ Magne Skodvin in 1956 and his doctoral thesis and following books laid the groundwork of what would become the “Skodvin school”, and are by all indications respected by the other authors in this thesis, having published several books in English and working closely with Hjemmefrontmuseet and Forsvarets krigshistoriske avdeling (today known as Institutt for forsvarsstudier). Due to limited time and for the sake of brevity, this book will be excluded from this historiography, but has to be mentioned as he is representative of this period.⁵

From 1965, an exceptional doctoral degree by Carl-Axel Gemzell was published through Lund University named *Raeder, Hitler und Skandinavien : der Kampf für einen maritimen Operationsplan*. The thesis he wrote was written in German, which I believe was done to make it more accessible to those historians that held the opposite views from what he was presenting. Nonetheless it would, along with other contemporary writers, change the conversation that was raging in the intellectual circles of the time.⁶ His thesis was in short a quick rebuttal by the time's leading interpretation, the work of Hubatsch, and wanted to expand and deepen the understanding of German intent.⁷ He is one of the most influential historians mentioned here, and his work is still used as a relevant and modern piece of research, and there is no sign of the contents becoming “out of date” any time soon.

² Sæveraas, T., & Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet Institutt for historiske studier. (2017). *"Beton Macht Geschichte" : Organisation Todt Og Utbyggingen Av Festung Norwegen*, 2017:5, VII. 83 “den mest omfangsrige historiefaglige gjennomgangen av Operasjon Weserübung er fremdeles Hubatsch”

³ Clemmesen, M. H., & Faulkner, M. (2013). *Northern European overture to war, 1939-1941 : from Memel to Barbarossa* (Vol. 87). Brill. 117

⁴ Derry, T. (1952). *The campaign in Norway (History of the Second World War : (United Kingdom military series)*. London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office.

⁵ Skodvin, M. (1956). *Striden om okkupasjonsstyret i Norge : Fram til 25. september 1940*. Oslo: Det norske samlaget.; Borgersrud, Lars. (2014). *9 April revised: On the Norwegian history tradition after Magne Skodvin on Quisling and the invasion of Norway in 1940*. Scandinavian Journal of History, 39(3). 356

⁶ Hobson, Rolf. (2013). Weserübung in German and Norwegian Historiography. In *Northern European Overture to War, 1939–1941* (Vol. 87, History of Warfare, pp. 447-463). 117

⁷ Borgersrud, Lars. 9 april. 372

In the middle of the debate is Henrik O. Lunde with his book *Hitler's pre-emptive war* released in 2009.⁸ In his book he gives an equal and concise explanation to the successes and shortcomings of both Allied and German strategic planning. He makes a conscious choice of mentioning each possible shortcomings in concise language and warns against drawing conclusions from his work as he seems to be very aware that his book will eventually and inadvertently contain errors as research in the area expands.⁹ From what I can gather, he was born in Norway and moved at an early age to the U.S. From there he would distinguish himself in the U.S. special forces and take active part in the Vietnam war. After his army career he would find an interest in his place of birth and begin writing about it, with a focus on the Second World War.¹⁰ His book is a good fit to the larger debate as there is no apparent personal opinion that I can spot when reading his work. From the very least this book seems to contextualize its possible weaknesses and wishes to give light to more secondary sources for primarily english speaking readers. While there will always be some bias, as there will inadvertently be here, he doesn't refrain from giving all plausible theories a spot in his book, which we will take a look at further into the text.

To present the Norwegian author, we will first give some context to the Norwegian experience to the war. 9th of April, a date that became a day when Norway got its taste of modern offensive war, it can be argued that the occupation of the country had profoundly changed the psyche of the average Norwegian. The general consensus in the attitude of Norwegians is that they were an active ally against Nazism during the war and are proponents of Western Idealism and democratic values today. Norwegians to this day have completely abandoned the pretext of neutrality in favour of an international security system, and was one of the charter nations of NATO.¹¹ The book *Hitlers Norge : okkupasjonsmakten 1940-1945* by Berit Nøkleby, argues in her book of a lot of ideological reasons behind the fascination with Norway, and the greater political considerations of the Germans, to day to day operations of occupied Norway. Her book is also a good way to describe the contemporary Norwegian historical viewpoint, with the newer focus on occupational history, compared to

⁸ Lunde, H. *Hitler's pre-emptive war*.

⁹ Ibid. IX-X

¹⁰ https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/2106002.Henrik_O_Lunde

¹¹ Lunde, H. *Hitler's pre-emptive war*. 553

the more regular military history that focuses mostly on strategic considerations. But it's the prelude of the attack that will be the most relevant for our text.s

2. Major Theories

Before presenting the major theories for this topic, there is the issue of relevance to explain. All theories are in practice descriptions of the various authors' interpretations of the same primary sources. When the war was lost for Germany, a "Vernichtungsbefehl" was ordered to destroy as much materials and documents as possible. The entire Reichskommissar Norwegen archive was destroyed.¹² All of the authors presented here mention this destruction, and also over a conversation through email, Gunnar D. Hatlehol mentions this issue in the present day: "Falkenhorsts personlige arkiv, som var stort, ble tatt av sovjeterne da de rykket inn på eiendommen hans. Siden har ingen sett det. Franz Böhmes privatarkiv er inntakt til høsten 1944 i Wien. Materialet fra Norges-tiden havnet i private hender. Per Hansson fikk tak i det. Jeg tenkte, etter allerede å ha gjort noen sonderinger, å finne ut om dette arkivet fortsatt befinner seg i Hanssons etterlatte papirer hos familien - vårt eneste håp, egentlig...". This makes the primary sources available to us few and open to interpretation, and can give an individual a lot of leeway in confirming their views.

When explaining the issue of relevance, there is also the problem of individual aptitude to language. The problem occurs when there is high interest about a topic from authors with various nationalities. These authors could and would often write in their respective languages, which makes the general procurement of these works a large undertaking when researching. I was lucky that NTNU had all of the major works in paperform, and lent me those throughout the writing process. This issue can be quite troublesome as one author's narrative could become the dominant theory when discussing a topic, especially if the work has either been written or translated to English. This influence on history can be very disruptive, especially if the topic is possibly obscure or less known about, or if the topic at hand is more important for one nationality than others. In our circumstance there is this problem of linguistic and interest overlap.

¹² Nøkleby, B. (2016). *Hitlers Norge : Okkupasjonsmakten 1940-1945*. Oslo: Cappelen Damm. 379; Gemzell, C. (1965). *Raeder, Hitler und Skandinavien : Der Kampf für einen maritimen Operationsplan* (Vol. 16, *Bibliotheca historica Lundensis* (trykt utg.)). Lund: Gleerup. 331

2.1. Perspectives: Präventivmaßnahme, Aggression or Strategic Race?

Perspectives is an important detail to point out. Giving a nuanced viewpoint in history is in itself nigh impossible, as written words are limited in meaning and sentences are limited in length. Therefore it is inevitable, when writing a historical text, to run into the problem of writing the text into something that you find worthy writing down. Simply put, the way you view the past is often defined by what you are interested in, and your text is by extension a form of this inherent interest. To give an example which will be relevant to this text, we can reasonably argue that Germans that took part in the war had a widely different experience than the Norwegians, and this experience has bleed down the generations to today. We will later look at these differences of perspectives as we begin to delve into the issues that most interest the various authors who will be highlighted here. Modern historical consensus agrees to an almost universal extent that historical works about Operation “Weserübung”, and the prelude and conclusion of conflict is to a large extent based on tendencies depending on which “side” of the conflict one was. Especially in Norwegian circles there is an agreement that the contemporary history is yet to be completed and there still is a missing final answer.¹³ In his doctoral thesis, Torgeir E. Sæveraas gives an excellent remark at John Keegan's quote “The history of the Second World War is not yet written”: “Vi er fortsatt langt unna en enkeltstående historisk fremstilling av andre verdenskrig som evner å ta opp i seg alle fasetter av krigen. Til det var den for omfattende, både i tid, geografisk utstrekning og ikke minst i de lidelsene den medførte.”¹⁴

There are three ways of categorising the theories for the main question of this thesis. The theories are aggressive/offensive, defensive, or a strategic race. The historiography can in simple lines be split between, German, Nordic and others. This is by no means a correct division and it should be noted that every theory is just a discrete derivative of the whole story. The main reason for dividing the different stories is to shine through the haze of each author's writing and to find the underlying characteristics and contrasts of their arguments.

¹³ Ole Kristian Grimnes. (1990). “*Søkelys på norsk krigstidshistorie 1940-1945*”. Utg. Samarbeidsrådet for krigsveteranforeninger. 1990. seminar av krigstidshistorikere og veteraner i Vitenskaps-Akademiet 26. mars 1990: 12-13

¹⁴ Sæveraas, T. “*Beton macht Geschichte*” 11; Keegan, John (1996): *The Battle for History. Re-fighting World War II*. New York: Vintage Books, s. 30

2.2. Theory 1: Präventivmaßnahme

Firstly we'll need to define and explain "Präventivmaßnahme". Directly translated it will read "Preventative measure". As it implies, a preventative measure is when someone or something takes an action to avert or avoid an impending operation or process, often as a measure to protect or preserve itself or an asset. The theory we will highlight takes this German name to differentiate its origins from the other theories, and gives a subtle representation to an early claim to the reason for the invasion, therefore we will not use the sometimes called "Hubatsch-version". As this view of the attack is largely limited to the "apologetic" Germans immediately after the war, we will retain the German pronunciation, so the representation keeps to those early historians that wished to find a morally correct explanation to the attack. Now that we have the word defined we can move on to the contents of the theory.

2.2.1 Hubatsch

Hubatsch's book is one of the most source heavy books in this collection, and probably the most known and reviewed. Linguistically his book is written entirely in academic German. In the main body of the book, his structure is easy to follow and his arguments are to the point. His actual main part where he gives his views is actually quite short, giving more room for him to point out why he gives the conclusions presented, and room to present primary sources at the back of the book. To visualise the amount of space he gives, the historical writing is about 40%, and the space for primary sources (transcriptions, copies of documents, etc.) accumulates to around 60%. In short, the book is easy to follow and an individual proficient in German can easily read and understand what he is trying to say, and is the most authoritative in number of primary sources.

Hubatsch begins his second edition "*Weserübung*" (1960) by acknowledging works that have been published since his first publication. He notes the "British representations" by T. K. Derry and the "Norwegian representations" of Magne Skodvin as new competing works. He still says that when it comes to the reasons for the German attack on Norway and Denmark, it is opinion against opinion, and that this book's explanation and arguments is his own view.¹⁵ His book containing the reasons and planning of the attack is in fact quite short, only two

¹⁵ Hubatsch, W. (1960). "*Weserübung*": *Die deutsche Besetzung von Dänemark und Norwegen 1940: Nach amtlichen Unterlagen dargestellt, mit einem Anhang: Dokumente zum Norwegenfeldzug 1940* (2. völlig neu bearb. Aufl. ed., Vol. Bd. 7, Studien und Dokumente zur Geschichte des zweiten Weltkrieges). Göttingen: Musterschmidt. XII

chapters long. The rest of the book is dedicated to the actual conflict itself. Hubatsch begins by noting Scandinavian history in relation to Russia, Britain and Germany all the way back from 1848 to the outbreak of the war.¹⁶ The context in which I interpret Hubatsch's introduction is as a prelude to his arguments. He describes contradictory actions by Danish and Norwegian governments, balancing declared neutrality and Allied pressure to restrict German access to trade and their waters during the First World War. After the outbreak of the Second World War, he explains further that Germany had at several times indicated that Germany had assured that if the countries would adhere to its neutrality rules, they would by no means breach Norwegian or Danish sovereignty.¹⁷ Yet, the argument starts as he lets the reader know that Norway began to ignore German protests of internment of their warships and that the "initiative" began to favor England unfairly.¹⁸ This initiative was acted on as the Winter War erupted, when the Soviet Union attacked Finland. British and French war planners intended to use the pretext of "helping Finland" to occupy Narvik and the Swedish Iron mines in the North.¹⁹ This plan was temporarily scrapped when fighting between the Soviets and Finnish ended on the 12 of March.

After the peace, Hubatsch put forward his views on what First Lord of the Admiralty Churchill planned for Norway, and how he wanted by every means possible to wage war without restrictions. He argues that England's plans were to subtly pressure the neutral states to give up sovereignty to the Western Powers, and if they wouldn't comply it would be a justification to view their non-compliance as defiance and interference to their war effort.²⁰ It should be noted that it's here that Hubatsch starts to heavily imply that British aggressional intentions were only hampered by unintended obstacles, and had there not been interference, it would have been the British that would have been attacking nations of neutral states.²¹ Hubatsch dismisses Quisling's role in the planning, noting the German embassy in Oslo writing "[Quisling] not to be taken seriously, and his politics entirely opposite [to ours]...".²² He then goes and notes the Quisling-Hitler meeting as an impetus for "Studie Nord", a plan he calls as military assistance incase of infringement of Norwegian neutrality, a so-called

¹⁶ Ibid 1-15

¹⁷ Ibid 14

¹⁸ Ibid 17

¹⁹ Ibid 20

²⁰ Ibid 22-23

²¹ Ibid 23-26; 157

²² Ibid 30

“cold occupation”.²³ Hubatsch indicates that the dismissal for a new operation code named "Weserübung" was according to Hitler "related to the [waging] of total war". In context it seems as if it meant to imply that the plan was replaced to adapt to the attritional doctrine the Germans had to accept to wear down the British and have a chance to win outright.²⁴

Writing about the Altmark incident, Hubatsch gives details that are comparable to contemporary texts today. The only notable exception is that he classifies the “Altmark” as a civilian tradeship that had, due to humanitarian considerations, to be classified as a ship that serves as “Hilfsschiff” and therefore is in no way a warship.²⁵ It was on its way back from Texas and had to alleviate the warship “Graf Spee” of captured prisoners from sunken tradeships.²⁶ It was searched twice by Norwegian patrol ships for illegal storage, one described as “fleeting” (as in weak) and a subsequent search that was denied by the German captain and the delegation in Oslo. Due to the German protests, the Norwegians concluded that there were presumably prisoners aboard, which was against their neutrality rules. The increased Norwegian and German traffic was then probably intercepted by the British.²⁷ This was the catalyst for the armed boarding by the British ships “Cossack”, “Intrepid” and “Ivanhoe” and the subsequent capture of the “Altmark”. Hubatsch then differs when writing about the public reaction. To quote and translate: “The stir, this undeniable and grave breach of neutrality caused in the eyes of the world, was enormous”, followed by a deliberation on if it was more a matter of prestige for the British, a weak neutrality control by the Norwegians, or by what means it was unfair to the Germans that there was no clarity from the Norwegians to what was a breach or not.²⁸ He ends the chapter, concluding that the legitimacy of Norwegian neutrality unquestionably would not be defended by the Norwegians by an eventual attack by the British or French. The Germans now had to “Als Gegenmaßnahmen” (as a countermove-/reaction) prepare to: “a) occupy Norwegian coastline. b) Immediately occupy Denmark and c) secure the skagerrak channel. d) Prepare air forces for operations in Norway to block attempts by the British to attack Norway, and lastly e) put larger political

²³ Ibid 31

²⁴ Ibid 32

²⁵ Ibid 33

²⁶ As a sidenote, I found it humorous that when Hubatsch was counting the prisoners he describes them as: “228 Engländer, 67 Inder und 8 Neger an bord”. Different times, different views.

²⁷ Ibid 34

²⁸ Ibid 35-36

pressure on Sweden.”²⁹ This “difficult” decision by the OKW (Oberkommando des Wehrmacht) and the Wehrmachtführung was finally decided to start its planning on the 21 of February, and was on the 1st of March approved by the Führer.³⁰

2.2.2 Summary of theory 1

The “Präventivmaßnahme” theory was one of the major theories of early historiography for the post-war period. Exemplified by Hubatsch’s book it was the first German academic work that delved into the prelude of the war. As mentioned earlier, it is a very thorough book with exclusive access to diaries, documents, and interviews with various influential individuals throughout the planning and execution phase for the invasion. The “Präventivmaßnahme” theory was in itself probably his response against the leading interpretation established by the Nuremberg Trials (although he does mention apparently in his first edition that that is not his intention). He focuses a large part on German perspective argumentation, meaning that his book delves into the popular perception that the attack of the Nordic countries of Denmark and Norway was a justified military action to defend itself against a possible British action.³¹ This is a classic case of confirmation bias, exemplified by the general apologetic trend of his time period, and the book’s content reflects the subtle difference. Simply, it was in his view natural for Germany to intervene in defence of its interest and Germany’s fragile geographic position.³²

2.3. Theory 2: Aggression

After the Nuremberg Trials, German historians wrote several books which worked to rectify their perceived injustice and unfair judgements on the Grand Admirals.³³ Most of these authors and historians have been debunked and corrected, and several of them have been scrutinized for conflict of interest or complicity in the war, yet their influence persisted.³⁴ The view that the attack was an aggressive action was already established by the Nuremberg trials 1945-46, but had to be reiterated after the push by the German historians. The emphasis was instrumental to change the intellectual discussion, and focus back on the origins and

²⁹ Ibid 37

³⁰ Ibid 37-38; 47

³¹ Hobson, Rolf. *Weserübung in German and Norwegian Historiography*. 117

³² Hubatsch. *Weserübung*. 157

³³ Hobson, Rolf. 115

³⁴ Ibid 453

intentions of the Germans. It is this effort, pluss a modern example that builds on this, that we will look at in this part.

2.3.1 Gemzell

Gemzell, who is often referenced as the man who went against the ruling viewpoint of his time, has a vastly more difficult work to comprehend.³⁵ The Swede, who published his doctorates thesis in German, was deliberately his attempt to highlight what he viewed and recognised as major oversights by the German historians of his time. The entirety of his thesis is a text heavy and difficult tome to read, even for this student who has been raised in a German speaking country. Every page and sentence is riddled with footnotes and accompanying documentation. Some sources are intersected between pages, and quoted material is never translated. For example, the points he extracts from French historians and generals are in plain text and presented as is. I would argue that it serves him well to some extent, as every argument is presented immediately with a primary or secondary source. The only issue is that Gemzell is highly analytical and hard to read, which makes reading and understanding his book a highly daunting task for any reader. As a brief note, Gemzell also wrote a book called “Organization, Conflict and Innovation. A Study of German Naval Strategic Planning, 1888-1940”³⁶, which is written in english and covers a larger area of German naval strategic thinking, doctrine, and of course Operation Weserübung and the Second World War. This book is by quick examination not comparable to the analytical doctoral thesis mentioned here, and is much more forgiving.

Gemzell was quite innovative in his thesis, in which he went against most of the accepted consensus previously established by Hubatsch. Gemzell begins in his introduction to zoom out to look at what was his present day world (1965). At that point 25 years had passed since the beginning of the german occupation of Norway and Denmark.³⁷ He notes that sentiments in his period, both public and academic, were very defined by the events that occurred after the actions committed by the germans. In his own words, the function and task of his thesis

³⁵ Paulsen, Helge. (1990). *Hva ville de med Norge? Within "Søkelys på norsk krigstidshistorie 1940-1945"*. Utg. Samarbeidsrådet for krigsveteranforeninger. 1990. Seminar av krigstidshistorikere og veteraner i Vitenskaps-Akademiet 26. mars 1990. 117

³⁶ Gemzell, C. (1973). *Organization, conflict, and innovation : A study of German naval strategic planning, 1888-1940* (Vol. 4, Scandinavian university books). Stockholm: Esselte studium.

³⁷ Gemzell. *Raeder*. 1

was to research the strategic goals of the Navy, Oberbefehlshaber Erich Raeder of the Oberkommando der Marine, and by which means Raeder used to influence Hitler to achieve those goals.³⁸ He reveals how there was an increased need for Germany to starve Britain early, and therefore how there was a tug of war between the Luftwaffe and Kriegsmarine for operational priority. The topics that are presented in the interbranch conflict are the armament and resource allocation, influence on larger strategic decisions, and of course the offensive or defensive nature of the operation.³⁹

Gemzell was one of those initial individuals who wanted to reestablish the verdict that Nuremberg trials established, which focuses on the German aggressions and how those aggressions were premeditated. And this premeditation stands as his core arguments and which some were of the most inflammatory of the time. Gemzell argues continuity from the First World War and the second, which outlines the second chapter of his thesis. This continuity is based on the starvation and naval blockade Germany experienced during the First World War, a stark reminder that those who rule the seas, rule the world.⁴⁰ Throughout this work he alludes to German pre-war planning and German experiences gained from the Great War, and in chapter 9 the prominence of his arguments begin to form. He illuminates the beginning of the German discussions for a possible expansion of Uboat bases to the north at the war conference which was arranged in 10. October between Grossadmiral Raeder, Chief of the OKW (probably Keitel) and the Führer, among others.⁴¹ He quotes Raeder saying that the conquering of Belgium will have no use for the Kriegsmarine, and that a “Stützpunkt” (Base) on the Norwegian coast and Trondheim would be of best use for the Navy and UBoat Fleet.⁴² This is seen as a counter-proposal to the Western-offensive, and a pointer to a possible wish for greater operational priority.⁴³ A good quote highlights Gemzell's coming views on the conferences and war-plannings by beginning his chapter to quote Raeder: “Je früher Beginn und je brutaler, umso früher die Wirkung, umso kürzer der Krieg.

³⁸ Ibid

³⁹ Ibid 97; 161; 196; 229

⁴⁰ Ibid 13-24

⁴¹ Ibid 216-219; 217

⁴² Ibid 217

⁴³ Ibid 228-229

Alle Einschränkungen verlängern den Krieg".⁴⁴ The participants of the conference all fully agree to this assertion.⁴⁵

From this, Gemzell details the background and motives for Raeder's interest in starting a confrontation in Norway before the 10. October conference. A week before, on the 3. of October, Grossadmiral Raeder and BdU (Befehlshaber der U-Boote) Admiral Dönitz deliberated on some of their immediate operational capabilities.⁴⁶ They discuss the inherent concerns of the enabling of bases in Norway, and in which way it will profit the war effort. Issues that were considered were questions like: "a) Which locations are in question to where bases in Norway should be established? b) Can the takeover of these bases, in case of noncooperation from the Norwegians, against their will be taken by military force? c) Are there defensive possibilities after the occupation [has succeeded]..." among others.⁴⁷ This meeting suggests, according to Gemzell, to early aggressive intentions, and that Raeder indeed asked these questions to have them proven and examined before the 10. of October conference with Hitler present.⁴⁸ With this context, Gemzell writes: "We can determine that from at least the initial days of October, Raeder had given consideration to the possibility of expanding into Norway. Therefore, the initiative to Hitler the 10. October was by no means an improvisation, but a carefully examined consideration."⁴⁹ As a consequence of the revelation that Raeder had in fact been contemplating aggressive action on Norway, Gemzell moves on to consider if there is any point in discussing the offensive or defensive motives for the operation and from there he warns of the pitfalls of taking the primary sources literally. He notes that the primary sources from the 10. October is angled with a defensive justification, and as we have seen, those motives are not credible.⁵⁰ A seeming rebuttal of the Hubatsch-version of events.

2.3.2 Nøkleby

A newer theme which has emerged through the years is the inclusion of other possible intentions the Germans might have had. The purely political intentions of occupied Norway

⁴⁴ Ibid 216-217

⁴⁵ Ibid. "The earlier and brutal the start, the earlier the effect, the shorter the war. Every restriction lengthens the war"

⁴⁶ Ibid 218

⁴⁷ Ibid 219

⁴⁸ Ibid 219-220

⁴⁹ Ibid 223

⁵⁰ Ibid 229

was seldom discussed before the 1990s-2000s. Nøkleby gives a good overview over what Germany's political leaders wanted to do with Norway in case of an eventual victory over the war. The initial reaction and improvisation of the inclusion of the Norwegian NS party at the beginning of the occupation.⁵¹ Power dynamic issues between military branches and appointed political leaders, political assessments between punishing or forgiving initial resistance, and the organisation of the Norwegian economy is excellently presented and explained to the reader. The book's cornerstone is the political and ideological explanation, and reading it through that lens makes it easier to understand why Norwegian contemporary historiography is particularly different, and at least for this book.

Nøkleby's writing is, with a lack of words, colourful. She writes as a storyteller that sometimes, possibly on purpose, shows her to rather tell the situation as a story, backed nonetheless by sources not dissimilar to others noted here. It may be the case that the book is intended for a wider Norwegian audience, and that this writing style was picked to serve as an easier entrance to the subject. Additionally, it is in this writer's opinion that the structure of the book is a bit littered, with titles that do not properly explain what the chapters contain, and if they do then it's intersected with other titles that serve only to build to the narrative of the text. Footnotes are sometimes missing or not present in observations made by Nøkleby. Such omitted claims makes it difficult to check and verify some assertions. All footnotes collectively placed at the end, making checking also a cumbersome task. Nonetheless, the book is relatable to Lunde's work, giving beginners who wish to learn more about the occupation a good fundamental base to learn about a topic, which in detail few properly understands or knows about.

Nøkleby has an apparent pro-Norwegian view. It is more apparent today that Norwegian historians put less relevance in allied planning than previously touted by Hubatsch. She only barely mentions allied plans.⁵² It is clear today of a semblance of agreement that it's misleading to give too much focus on explaining the German attack as a counter reaction to possible English or French encroachment on Norwegian territory. This can be the reason for why Nøkleby gives generally no particular mention of their theoretical involvement. And it is

⁵¹ Nøkleby. *Hitlers Norge*. 55

⁵² Ibid 47-38

important to mention that it is generally only theoretical in Norwegian views, so refraining to discuss a potentiality is a justified argument not to include too much of it in any text.⁵³

She paints a situation where Hans Wilhelm Scheidt of APA (Außenpolitisches Amt der NSDAP) had a small revelation to visit Norway, and uses his reports to APA to highlight a possible early fascination towards Quisling. While Scheidt was instrumental to give NS access to German funds, it is doubtful in my opinion that Germany wanted more than just sow unrest and give life support to an ideologically equivalent Party.⁵⁴ Nøkleby corroborates that, 10. oktober 1939, Erich Raeder asked Hitler to consider looking into the question relating to Norwegian coast as an important strategic area.⁵⁵ Hitler was preoccupied with the Westfront, by telling Raeder to leave his notes for him to read later.⁵⁶ Nøkleby's book is quite short on the matter and focuses rather on the whole political, talking about APA and their contact with Quisling, rather than the military.⁵⁷ The only reason Nøkleby gives to Raeder's report for Hitler was that Raeder had a "strategic interest", while others in Berlin had racial interest for the "relatives in the North".⁵⁸ This racial interest was the main assignment of APA (außenpolitisches amt der NSDAP), created to attempt to establish a pan-germanic feeling across the north-western Europe.⁵⁹

There should be noted the particular focus on the Quisling, Rosenbergs and Scheidt axis. Nøkleby reports Quisling giving such information at a meeting with Rosenberg during summer 1939, setup by Scheidt, where he warns of "considerable British interests of the Norwegian coast", together with concerns with the iron ore export from Narvik and Norwegian pro-anglo sympathies.⁶⁰ On the 11. desember 1939 Raeder meets former defence minister Vidkun Quisling, tentatively listens to what his views are of Norwegians ability to defend itself against Britain. She explains that the details of the meeting was the impetus for Raeder's conviction that Norway was in a militarily weak and exposed position, and that he saw it as an opportunity to expand German reach. Therefore, Raeder wished to set up a meeting between the Fører and the Führer. A few days later, after the Führer had met

⁵³ ref. page 9 top paragraph

⁵⁴ Ibid 25-26

⁵⁵ Ibid 25

⁵⁶ Ibid 25

⁵⁷ Ibid 25-27

⁵⁸ Ibid 25

⁵⁹ Ibid

⁶⁰ Ibid 26

Quisling himself, and seemingly convinced Hitler would order an investigation called “Studie Nord”⁶¹. Further mention of Quisling dies out temporarily, when Quisling was sidelined from any involvement in future operational planning.⁶² 1 of march, Hitler signed the first operative order to “Operation Weserübung”.⁶³ Hitler reiterated his reasons for attack, “as a defence against a british danger to the north, get operational freedom for the KM, hold the shipping lane open with an emphasis to the iron ore transportation”.⁶⁴

The rest of the book covers the larger political, societal and military aspects of the occupation, but uses this to build on the larger background for Germany’s intentions for Norway. She criticizes a passage in Hubatsch's *Weserübung* that: “The German forces behaved as gently as was possible in a war”, noting that even as a neutral country, Norway had lost 55 ships by u-boats, before suffering an occupation.⁶⁵ She differs from contemporary scholars where she shows how Hitler and the various supreme commanders of the branches of the Wehrmacht had a “Schicksalszone” fascination from where the war would be decided, and the power struggles that emerged between the leaders. Loosely it can be translated as “zone of confrontation”, but seen translated as “zone of destiny” being used by Lunde in his work.⁶⁶ She notes that following the invasion, the complete focus of a “Schicksalszone” with the West, and was for Hitler almost certainly in Norway, quoting him in a conversation made with the OBdM (Oberbefehlshaber der Marine) Raeder, noted in SKL (Seekriegsleitung) 22. January 1942.⁶⁷ One important detail Nøkleby includes with the intentions of Hitler, is the lack of an official peace treaty between the puppet NS (Nasjonal Samling) government and Germany.⁶⁸ As it happened, the peace treaty would not be negotiated until the end of the war, because that would mean that the Reichskommissariat would be dissolved and NS would take over control of Norway.⁶⁹ This would constitute a severe loss of power and jurisdiction to the Germans. It begs the question on Hitlers intentions for Norway in an eventual scenario where Germany won the war.⁷⁰

⁶¹ Ibid 27, KTB Chronik, Jodl’s diary quoted through Hubatsch

⁶² Ibid 29-30

⁶³ Ibid 35

⁶⁴ Ibid 34

⁶⁵ Ibid 171; 182-185

⁶⁶ Lunde. *Hitler’s pre-emptive war*. 550

⁶⁷ Nøkleby. *Hitlers Norge*. 228-229

⁶⁸ Ibid

⁶⁹ Ibid

⁷⁰ Ibid 230-231

2.3.3 Summary of theory 2

The theory of aggression laid the groundwork for the accepted explanation today many subscribe to. Although Gemzell experienced a lot of pushback through his work, they were mostly because he chose to highlight the inadequacies of previous research.⁷¹ It properly laid the background and motives for Raeder's influence and ambitions both before and after the 10. October conference. Early aggressive intentions, questions of feasibility to conduct large scale operations, and grand strategic aims made refuting this theory a trifling prospect. It placed responsibility on Raeder who had given considerable thought to the possibility of expanding into Norway wanting to have them proven and examined before the 10. October conference. Gemzell gave the arguments that this was by no means an improvisation but a carefully examined consideration. After the conference of 10.10 it became clear the increased need for Germany to starve Britain early, and how there was a tug of war between the Luftwaffe and Kriegsmarine for operational priority.⁷²

Nøkleby expands on this. Her arguments fall along the same lines as Gemzell, but gives an important need for a Norwegian viewpoint and context. She debates the connection of the ideological reasons for the initial contact with Quisling and the NS party. APA's focus on Norway is covered to a much larger extent than other secondary sources read, and the reason for the focus stems primarily for the intelligence gained from the former Defence Minister Quisling, strategic and political interests, and the two parties mutual wish to grow their influence in their respective countries. She considers the contribution Quisling gave to promote and spur up the idea of a Norway under a Nazi friendly regime, especially noting Hitler giving the green light to begin initiate study of the utility of gaining bases immediately after the meeting with Quisling.

2.4. Theory 3: Strategic Race

We will include one modern historian's perspective on both takes. There are just a few historians that give equal space and focus to both the Allied plans and German plans, reason might be that giving an unequal attention to one or the other might incur suspicion of deliberate bias. There is a fine line to be tread, especially to Lunde's work when discussing

⁷¹ Hobson. *Weserübung in German and Norwegian Historiography*. 118

⁷² Ibid 217

and comparing the two as competing plans, with both adversaries aware of this fact. In other words, a strategic race.

2.4.1 Lunde

The modern authors we present here are to a much greater extent simpler to read. Henrik O. Lunde's book is a great introductory work for individuals who want to start learning more about the invasion of Norway. The structure is inductive with clear worded and contextual explanation of what the chapter includes and contains. His footnotes are numerous, not as plenty as the earlier, "older" researchers, but enough to back all of his claims. After each chapter he highlights and presents his footnotes, a good placement as one can quickly check a claim by turning just a few pages. His foreword chapter might suggest that this book was as a whole probably also intended for an American audience writing: "Here on the other side of the pond...", but it's a sufficient and excellent book for anyone with an interest to read.

Henrik O. Lunde's book begins by setting up the situation for the reader. He gives a clear rundown on Norway's strategic importance, both theoretically and historically. It takes to account the allied blockade of the First World War and gives good context on how an effective blockade can be achieved by both sides by utilising Norway's unique geographic positioning. Equally he shows in short sentences how economically crucial the Narvik port, and the Norwegian gap was for the import of essential war materiell for Germany.⁷³ Reason for Lund's short explanation of these points at the very beginning is to give the reader some context that will be built upon in coming chapters. He explains that his intent is to take a new view from well known english literature that are old and unbalanced in his view, and that he wishes to present Norwegian authors, as well as German, which often are untranslated and unknown outside of their respective countries and intellectual circles.⁷⁴

Before introducing German and British plans, Lunde illustrates Norwegian policies and interests. Politically, Norway's constitutional monarchy closely resembled the british, and their royal families were related. Economically, Norway's merchant fleet had closer ties to the british market than any others, and it's very survival depended on having the possibility to trade in the British market. These close economic ties were therefore crucial to Norway not to aggravate or exacerbate the Allied powers, so not to risk being isolated. Yet Norway had

⁷³ Lunde. *Hitler's pre-emptive war*. 1-2

⁷⁴ Ibid VII-IX

declared Neutrality, both because of military inadequacies and in recognition of its geographic positioning. Germany on the other hand was equally before and during the war an alien society to the Norwegians, its reputation made infamous by its aggressive foreign policies and territorial acquisition.⁷⁵ Lunde also portrays Norwegian military preparedness. He illustrates a defence which was marred by pacifist sentiments in the political sphere and a general unwillingness to expand the previous expansion of the 1914-1919 military. Most of the forts and fleets were either severely understaffed or mothballed, coupled together with an underwhelming reserve force, lackluster coastal defence and a comparably non-existent airforce and air defence. By the 1940s, the armed forces had World War I doctrine stuck in the developing and changing warfare of the Second World War, and unfortunately a known fact for both the British and Germans.⁷⁶

As we have seen previously in this thesis, there has been a discussion on whether to include or dismiss the Allied plannings. H.O. Lunde is one modern exception we include in this text that wishes to give the reader an oversight over the various proposals the Allied leaders conceived.⁷⁷ He presents Operation “Catherine”, a proposal to move a fleet to the Baltic Sea and starve out the Germans in one large action. This was not supported by the British Navy, due to lack of air cover and the lack of support from surrounding countries and the plan fell out of favour.⁷⁸ Later, he highlighted one of the possible issues if the Allies decided to drastically violate Norwegian neutrality, it would risk losing access and trade from the prominent and numerous Norwegian trade fleet, and alienate neutral states, particularly the U.S.⁷⁹ When the Winter War began, the Allies began to contemplate using the war as a pretext to interrupt German supply trade with Norway and Sweden.⁸⁰ Lunde quotes a memorandum by First Lord of the Admiralty Churchill to the War Cabinet dated Feb. 19, 1940: “... a state of war with Norway and Sweden would be more for our advantage than the present neutrality which gives all the advantages to Germany for nothing and imposes all disadvantages upon us.”⁸¹

⁷⁵ Ibid 4-5

⁷⁶ Ibid 6-9

⁷⁷ Ibid 11

⁷⁸ Ibid 12

⁷⁹ Ibid 13-15

⁸⁰ Ibid 16

⁸¹ Ibid 18

Lunde presents a difficult picture between reading too much into Churchills assertive statements and the actual reality of the situation. He concludes that Churchill was possibly absorbed to such an extent into halting the iron-ore imports, that he could have had a form of tunnel-vision and willfully ignored drawbacks.⁸² A plan by Chief of the Imperial General Staff, General Ironside, began to get backing by Prime Minister Chamberlain and Foreign Secretary Halifax.⁸³ The proposed plan consisted of an aggressive occupation of Narvik and Swedish Oxelösund, with the justification being that the force was intended to be an expedition to support Finland in its war.⁸⁴ The only limitation was that the Norwegian and Swedish governments had to consent to letting British forces enter their territory, which the British and French planners just assumed would be the case.⁸⁵ The British and French presented their plans on the 5th of February, code-named Operation “Avonmouth” and “Stratford”, and was approved by the War Council shortly after.⁸⁶ Initial request for military-access was then denied by the Norwegian and Swedish governments.⁸⁷ Two days after the Finnish accepted the Moscow Peace Treaty, on the 14th of March, the Allies set aside their expedition plans.⁸⁸

But, the ambitions for Scandinavia did not abate. Newly appointed Prime Minister Paul Reynaud and Churchill shared similar views on interdicting and expanding the war out where they perceived the Germans to be weak.⁸⁹ March 28th, the Council built upon the previous plans to conceive Operation “Wilfred” and “Plan R4”. The first involves a stern message to the Norwegians and Swedes followed by a mining operation in Norwegian territorial waters. The second was a plan to land 11 battalions as an eventual response to German counters to the violations of Operation Wilfred.⁹⁰ As the plans neared their planned operational dates the message to the Norwegians was delivered on April 5th, warning that the Allies would take precautionary measures if Germany would get an advantage from the smaller states through their resources or facilities.⁹¹ On the same day two forces of destroyers and the battlecruiser

⁸² Ibid 18

⁸³ Ibid 18

⁸⁴ Ibid 16

⁸⁵ Ibid 20

⁸⁶ Ibid 24-25

⁸⁷ Ibid 25

⁸⁸ Ibid 33

⁸⁹ Ibid 33-34

⁹⁰ Ibid 34

⁹¹ Ibid 37

“Renown” departed Scapa Flow to begin the mining operations.⁹² The transport ships destined for Narvik would depart just a few hours after the minefield had been laid, so Lunde concludes that this would have taken place regardless of German actions.⁹³ Lunde continues telling more about the confusion and orders to the commanders who would execute the landing, but this is unrelated to this thesis. What is relevant is Lunde's conclusion, which sets him apart from other modern Historians, in which he writes: “No doubt that what the Allies contemplated constituted aggression; but any clear cut interpretation becomes muddled because of almost simultaneous German action. Similarity of intent should not be inferred because of the timing of the operation.”⁹⁴

Lunde then moves on to the German plans which we have previously looked at. For the sake of brevity, we will give an abbreviated version, as much of the chapter matches those with Gemzell and Nøkleby. Therefore we will only include the most relevant parts that characterises Lunde's views. He corroborates that Norwegian ability to secure their sovereignty and neutrality was weak at best.⁹⁵ The meeting with Dönitz and subsequent discussions on the feasibility of an operation in the North, before the 10. October, is also mentioned.⁹⁶ Lunde heavily indicates that Raeder had a deep fear for British bases in Norway, possibly built upon reading Admiral Carl's journals on the subject.⁹⁷ There's a clear focus particularly on Raeder, as many of his views are presented, as well as his peers' recollection of Raeder. He is after all the highest ranking individual that had first broached Hitler about a possible action to defend German interests to the North. Henrik focuses on the military, particularly on the Seekriegsleitung (SKL), as they are intrinsically linked to Raeder.⁹⁸ The 10. October meeting is also inline with Gemzell's interpretation, that Raeder came into the meeting prepared, assertive, and with a purpose.⁹⁹ This struck a chord with the others as bases in Scandinavia would improve German position and would end British trade with the Scandinavian countries, shortening the war.¹⁰⁰

⁹² Ibid 38-39

⁹³ Ibid 37

⁹⁴ Ibid 41

⁹⁵ Ibid 47

⁹⁶ Ibid 49

⁹⁷ Ibid 48

⁹⁸ Ibid 50

⁹⁹ Ibid 50

¹⁰⁰ Ibid 51

In Lunde's work, it was Schreiber, by Raeder's appointment after the October meeting with Hitler, who established contact with Quisling. Quisling reported independent rumors of allied war plans in Scandinavia to Raeder, seemingly confirmed by western press and other foreign diplomats.¹⁰¹ His book then follows along the line with Gemzell's interpretation in details and dates.¹⁰² Lunde discounts Quisling as a significant military contribution, confirmed by the wish later to not include NS into their plans.¹⁰³ The Altmark incident also goes along the lines as with other historians, and gives no great importance to it other than it reinforced concerns of Norwegian ability to defend against aggressions.¹⁰⁴ Where Lunde differs again is when "Studie Nord" becomes "Weserübung", where he mentions a close cooperation between Raeder and Jodl, and even suggesting that there might have been an "axis" between the two men and their organization. He references Petersen Damegaard "Aksen OKW-OKM", and calls it feasible that because of this positive collaboration, the operation had its success both in organizing and executing "Weserübung".¹⁰⁵ He differs greatly when he concludes that through the Altmark Incident, learning through diplomats' report on march 30th of a conversation with Paul Reynold that allies would launch operations in northern Europe within days, and Raeder belief that Weserübung was a race against british plans and should be undertaken as soon as possible. All this put Hitler under the impression that the Operation was in a race with a competing British plan.¹⁰⁶ Lunde, as mentioned earlier, considers this as quite possible, calling Hitler "not paranoid" when discussing the effect of Allied bases in Norway, and considering the coincidence of the simultaneous dates of both operations, the race could have ended differently had the Germans not expedited "Weserübung" to the 9th of April.¹⁰⁷

2.4.2 Summary on theory 3

Lunde depicts a peculiar portrayal of the two sides of the war, one self-confident and presumptuous, the other realistic and assertive. Lunde makes sure to check all the boxes, giving all the necessary context and background to the reader before proceeding chronologically to the next case or chapter. It invites the reader to take in the information at a

¹⁰¹ Ibid 51

¹⁰² Ibid 51-56

¹⁰³ Ibid 56; 65

¹⁰⁴ Ibid 58

¹⁰⁵ Ibid 60; 83

¹⁰⁶ Ibid 63; 86; 120

¹⁰⁷ Ibid 550-551

consistent pace that assists to illuminate the author's perception. The book depicts Allied intentions in a comprehensive fashion, measuring the commitments and shortcomings of the Supreme Allied Command and their respective leaders and generals. The situation is filled with pressure to act on limiting or decisively reducing Germany's ability to wage war, and of the perceived need to bend the "rules" to find justification and an acceptable reason to offensively move against Germany to an area they held them as weak. On top of that, both were aware of Norway's lack of capability to defend its neutrality and weak military state. The plans of the allies were hampered only by their inability to disregard their norm of traditional warfare, blocked by coincidences like the end of the Winter War, and accidental similar dates of execution for Operation "Wilfred" and "R4", and Operation "Weserübung". He concludes that the Allies aren't guilty of anything as there was no time to actually conduct their plans, but that these plans definitely constitute aggression on the side of the Allies and clear intentions to violate a Neutral country.¹⁰⁸

With the Allied intentions presented, Lunde proceeds to cover the plans of the competing side. The most noteworthy inclusion of his perspective is the apparent anxiety Raeder had to a possible "flanking" offensive that would trap the Germans, coupled together with his views and suspicions about Britain's next moves. This prompts him to push the leadership to aggressively and quickly occupy points along the northern coast. With the Altmark Incident and other reports, Raeder starts to believe that their Operation was in a race against time and because of this Hitler expediates the planning.¹⁰⁹ Lunde describes a situation that had two unhealthily obsessed individuals focused on Norway, and two vastly different military structures that reacted differently to threats, for example the British blunder to give up R4, when spotting the German fleet.¹¹⁰ The race was exemplified by their respective need to outplay the other, and considering all connections, Lunde concludes that each side achieved their objectives, the British and French making Germany react and bring out their Navy, and Germany by securing and expanding their operational reach, but by large Germany came ahead.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ Ibid 41

¹⁰⁹ Ibid 63; 86; 120

¹¹⁰ Ibid 546; 550

¹¹¹ Ibid 544-545

3. Conclusion

There is no lack of books and articles on the topic we are discussing. There is continually more being written, but if observed closer and narrowed down material and research, we find there is still much to discuss and discover. Each new piece of literature has to grapple with the issue of finding a balance of interpreting what primary sources were left from the war, and then depicting it. But as we mentioned at the beginning of part 2, much material that could have assisted to give a clearer picture was destroyed before the war ended. Still there is a considerable collection that was saved, a reminder to how chaotic the final days were. The sources that were left had to be collected for the following trial against the individuals of the German leadership and war criminals. The IMT (International Military Tribunal) had the daunting task to collect, document and translate various leftovers from the destruction, it was the beginning of the history of Nazi Germany. According to Gemzell much of the material lacked proper handling in analysts and the proper time to thoroughly understand their contents.¹¹² Nonetheless the quick availability of these documents was an important decision, as it meant that others could pick up where the work was left off. Including this, we still have SKL's *Kriegstagebuch* (war diary), large parts of Jodl's diary printed in Hubatsch's "Weserübung" (original is stored in Alexandria, USA), and foreign dialog between Germany and other nations to adhere to.¹¹³ Various biographies and interviews are also available, but these should always be used with a grain of salt, as humans are generally less excited to implicate themselves to an operation seen as a breach of two neutral countries, and would go against their interest to give such sensitive information.

The overall discussion for the reasons of the attack is contentious. With work comes passion and there was no lack of it during the time when Gemzell wrote his doctoral thesis. As we've mentioned, when it was published he was berated and criticized by the ruling interpretation of the 1960's. There was no lack of confrontation and uproar to the challenge.¹¹⁴ But the question of "What wanted Germany with Norway?" is a relevant question to ask, and there should be no monopoly on who controls history. It shows that there was an important answer to be found, and an answer that can often lead to awkward answers. It is difficult to conclusively find an ideal answer, as each representative author gives an equally convincing

¹¹² Gemzell. *Raeder*. 331-333

¹¹³ Hubatsch. *Weserübung*. 354; Gemzell. *Raeder*. 340

¹¹⁴ Hobson. *Weserübung in German and Norwegian Historiography* 118

argument. Hubatsch with his analysis on the threats to German interests and war capabilities, Gemzell and Nøkleby's interpretations of intentional and prepared planning to expand and improve Germany's situation, and Lunde's take on both. As we previously saw, Hubatsch tells of an "opinion against opinion" situation.¹¹⁵ Gemzell also notes the particular focus on "blame" from researchers on both sides, falling into the trap of just using the sources literally and building a frame of confirming their own opinions.¹¹⁶

It is nonetheless important to find some kind answer that could satisfy a regular person asking the main question we are trying to answer, one that can have the ability to tell a general explanation of what the Germans wanted. An ideal answer would be one that uses some of the main features of each argument. There are continuous considerations that are always brought up. From the outset of the war, Germany had a dependency on the import of Swedish iron-ore. Ore traffic from Narvik constituted about 2.5 million to 3.5 million tons of a total of 10 million which Germany received.¹¹⁷ Even though Germany would receive more sources of iron after successful capture of Luxembourg and Lorraine mines that gave a subsequent 11 million tons more, Hubatsch argues that the ore received from Sweden helped make the great battles of 1942-44 possible.¹¹⁸ An occupation would also guarantee Swedish compliance. Also Gemzell notes that losing Norway, and the all important iron-ore provinces of Sweden would be synonymous with losing the war.¹¹⁹ Germany had legitimate interests to protect and keep. The other argument that recurs is the discussion of to what extent the Germans wanted to expand out with their Navy. The occupation of Norway would allow for an easier entrance to the Atlantic, increased coverage for bombers going to Great Britain and safe harbours protected by deep water fjords. It also helped them to expand bases out of their own territory, and make the British hesitant to approach the Norwegian sea.

A less clear subject that frequents the question is what the Germans knew and to what effect Quisling had in initiating the operation. No official record of the Hitler and Quisling meeting has surfaced, therefore it is probable that what was said between them is lost to us.¹²⁰ What we do have is Raeders letter to Rosenbergs noting when the meetings are scheduled and

¹¹⁵ ref. page 11 top of the page

¹¹⁶ Gemzell. *Raeder*. 7; 217; 296

¹¹⁷ Lunde. *Hitler's pre-emptive war*. 66

¹¹⁸ Ibid 550, Hubatsch. *Weserübung*. 221-227

¹¹⁹ Gemzell. *Raeder*. 327

¹²⁰ Lunde. *Hitler's pre-emptive war*. 54

Jodl's diary who also mentions the meeting. Several secondary sources write that the Quisling meeting first began with Grossadmiral Raeder on the 11th of december. But the dates are disputed, or more accurately unclear, possibly because of misread numerals in Raeders handwriting stating 14th december in Rosenbergs letter, Jodl's diary using the date of 13th december, and Quislings biographer Hewins setting the date as 15th in Quislings biography "Profet uten ære".¹²¹ Nøkleby seems to have misread or misinterpreted this, or just gone with previous research and gone for the 11th of december date.¹²² But considering that the Germans ultimately chose not to include Quisling or the NS in their final plans, it could be said that Quisling didn't have much of an effect on the decision.¹²³ But the question of what the Germans knew has a much more interesting conclusion. In the photo copies of the SKL Kriegstagebuch, 10th and 15th of March, the photos give us highly accurate reports of what the Germans knew of the British intentions.¹²⁴ 10th of March report notes that western newspapers are discussing the Altmark, Finland and the likely possibility of an larger operation being planned for Norway writing: "Der Gegner hat zweifellos seine Vorbereitungen für eine Landung in Norwegen getroffen und möglicherweise beendet", followed by "Sein strategisches Ziel ist die völlige Abschnürung der Erzzufuhr Deutschlands".¹²⁵ 15 march report notes the Winter War peace hindered but ultimately did not stop british plans for extending the war to scandinavia: "Vertrauensmann aus Norwegen meldet, dass norwegische Regierungsmitglieder trotz Russisch-finnischen Friedensschlusses und Chamberlain-Erklärung noch mit möglichkeit bevorstehenden plötzlichen englischen Vorstoßes gegen Narvik und Kiruna-Erztzgebiete rechnen.", and recommended to accelerate preparation for "Weserübung".¹²⁶ These reports tell us that Lunde's statement of Hitler not being "paranoid" of the british, can be concluded to be true, but equally it could be argued that he became paranoid with reports like these.

¹²¹ Ibid 83

¹²² Nøkleby. *Hitlers Norge*. 27

¹²³ Lunde. *Hitler's pre-emptive war*. 65

¹²⁴ Schreiber, G., & Maierhöfer, H. (1988). *Kriegstagebuch der Seekriegsleitung, 1939-1945, Teil A, Band 7 März 1940*. ES Mittler.

¹²⁵ "The opponent has undoubtedly made and possibly ended his preparations for a landing in Norway", "Its strategic goal is the complete cut-off of Germany's ore supplies"

¹²⁶ "Trusted man (agent) from Norway reports that, despite the Russo-Finnish peace agreement and Chamberlain declaration, Norwegian government members still expect the possibility of a sudden British advance against Narvik and Kiruna iron-ore areas"; There are no page numbers for these photo copies therefore only the dates are what can be referenced. Link to document: <https://opus4.kobv.de/opus4-zmsbw/files/19/04001864.pdf>.

From what we have gathered, we can build our reflections off of these arguments. So why did Germany choose to invade Norway? If a regular individual with limited knowledge of this topic were to ask this question, it would be most correct to give a mundane “it depends”, but it's this writer's opinion that the presentation of a strategic race as the reason that can succeed to consolidate both defensive and offensive arguments from this text. We know that before any serious British preparation for operations in Norway, Raeder had independently presented Hitler and the high command of the possibility of establishing bases in Norway to improve their geographic position, by force if needed to. Germany had also legitimate interests to protect from, and that Reader had an overview over what he viewed as a threat towards a neutral Norway, against Germany’s advantage.¹²⁷ This, culminated with real British ambitions to bring Germany to its knees made the Germans and Hitler uneasy. This meant that Hitler would expedite the operation as he saw the capture of Norway as a race against the British. Even after the invasion, Hitler was convinced that the war against the West would be decided in Norway.¹²⁸ This fascination on a “zone of destiny” meant that Germany would pour considerable resources to guard Norway and place the majority of the Kriegsmarine in its harbours.¹²⁹ It can be argued that the operation was ultimately an surprise action aimed to protect their resource supply from Narvik and establish political pressure to Sweden, improve German Naval position in the war, precede the british in initiative and strike first.

¹²⁷ KTB1/161E

¹²⁸ Kersaudy, F., & Hanssen, T. (1990). *Kappløpet om Norge : Det allierte felttoget i 1940*. Oslo: Grøndahl. 219; Stratigakos, Despina. (2020). *Hitler's Northern Utopia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 7

¹²⁹ Kersaudy, F., & Hanssen, T. *Kappløpet om Norge*. 219

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