CHAPTER 8

# From Criticism to Celebration: Intelligence Officers, Memory Wars, and the Recasting of Honour in Post-war Denmark

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The German occupation of Denmark beginning in April 1940 marked a decisive break in the Danish officer corps' fighting position. The armed forces were ordered to stand down, which was perceived as a moral defeat. This break deepened in August 1943, when the government's policy of cooperation collapsed. On the morning of 29 August, the German occupiers imposed martial law in all of Denmark and launched Operation Safari that disbanded and interned members of the armed forces. Once again, the military did not resist, and in the fall, around 300 officers fled to neutral Sweden, among them the leadership of the General Staff's Intelligence Section.[1] Their flight was widely criticised as a failure of duty at a moment of national crisis.[2] Yet in later historiographical literature , these same intelligence officers came to be

portrayed as early resistance actors and as essential contributors to Denmark's post-war recognition as an Allied nation.

This chapter explores how this revaluation was produced, propagated and contested in the post-war years. After the liberation, the inactivity and self-imposed exile by the officers were viewed with suspicion. The officers' legitimacy had to be restored over time, particularly through struggles over interpretation of and access to sources. The analysis presented in this chapter draws on Nikolay Koposov's concept of "memory wars", that is, struggles over the legitimacy of actions and events from the past as they are perceived in the present.[3] Koposov mainly analysed conflicts fought through avenues of legislation, the courts, and formal regulation. The Danish case constitutes a different kind of arena. Here, disputes over the wartime past unfolded within the discourse of historical knowledge itself, shaped by restrictive and selective archival access, exclusive cooperation with selected historians, and by the authority that was granted to a particular set of narratives.

By focusing on military officers, this chapter also engages a broader literature on post-war democratisation that moves beyond the simple binary of resistance and collaboration. After 1945, resocialisation involved more than just the reintegration of victims, veterans, and convicted collaborators. It also involved dealing with parts of the pre-war elite whose legitimacy had been badly damaged by the occupation. Army intelligence officers form one such case, in which questions of memory, honour, and the interpretation of the past became central to ensure political and institutional stabilisation.

The chapter consists of four sections. The first section addresses the wartime erosion of the military honour of Danish officers and their experiences of humiliation. The second section examines post-war criticism of the officer corps and public challenges to its legitimacy. The third section analyses internal post-war conflicts regarding authority and responsibility. The final section examines how historiography and archival control of sources contributed to the long-term stabilisation and rehabilitation of the intelligence officers' reputation and the understanding of their role in the war.

## THE OCCUPATION OF DENMARK

For the officer corps, both the occupation and the events of August 1943 were experienced as humiliations, and each involved a loss of prestige and honour. As Ute Frevert has argued, war is shaped not only by military action but also by senses of honour, shame, fear, and hope.[4] These emotional ideals shaped the

wartime conduct of the officers but also how they were seen following the war. Actions taken under the constraints of honour and shame would later have to be reinterpreted and justified to restore the legitimacy of the officer corps in the post-war period.

Within military circles, honour and masculinity were central to officers' self-understanding. The honourable way for a soldier to act was to fight and die for the nation, while surrendering or fleeing was considered disgraceful.[5] Fleeing into exile, from this perspective, is also a monumental experience in which shame and dishonour can play a major role. The nature of the Second World War sharpened these emotions. In occupied Europe, much of the resistance fighting was carried out by partisan groups, among whom communists—long-standing enemies of the conservative officer corps—played a prominent role. [6] It was they who fought, bled, and died on the battlefield, not the officers. For officers trained in conventional warfare and ideals of military honour, this inversion of roles deepened the sense of humiliation. Among rank-and-file soldiers and lower-ranking officers, the senior officer corps suffered a significant loss of prestige. In diaries from the period, criticism of the officers was widespread.[7] This internal disillusionment is also clearly visible in sources found in the Swedish Security Police archives, which contain large numbers of intercepted letters written by Danish refugees living in Sweden. In many letters, the officers were criticised for their lack of resolve and initiative. One regular soldier, for example, remarked that he: "...personally does not believe that our old officers are capable of anything truly effective."[8] A lower-ranking officer likewise complained about his superiors, asking rhetorically: "What has the Army done at home? Nothing. Now we sit comfortably and warmly in Sweden while others are fighting."[9] A third soldier expressed his frustration with the officers' passivity in the resistance struggle even more bluntly, dismissing them as "a staff of idiots."[10] While the officers' precise sentiments are impossible to reconstruct, there is little doubt that their sense of honour was severely shaken and that shame formed an essential part of their wartime experience.

A final humiliation for the officer corps followed in May 1945 when Denmark was liberated, not by its own military forces and resistance fighters, but by foreign powers: the British and the Soviets.[11] These wartime experiences would later become central points of contestation in the post-war struggles in shaping the narratives with regard to the ideals of honour and legitimacy.

## BRITISH CONNECTIONS

From the fall of 1940 onwards, the intelligence section transmitted relevant intel from occupied Denmark to the British. However, this effort ended abruptly when the officers fled to Sweden. The escape was an improvised and chaotic affair, with files lost, contacts broken, and no overarching master plan. The British also regarded the Danish intelligence officers—known as the Peters—with disdain. The leader of the Special Operations Executive's Danish section in London, Ralph Hollingworth noted the following in December 1943: "Those, including the PETERS themselves, who escaped to Sweden, did so to escape internment – not to come over to England to fight the Germans. The good ones remained behind, avoided registering by going underground, and they are available to us today."[12]

After fleeing to Sweden, the intelligence section in Denmark collapsed, but out of these rubbles grew a new interimistically formed intelligence, geographically located in Stockholm. From November 1943 until 5 May 1945, the Danish officers produced and transmitted roughly 15,000 pages of intelligence to the British.[13] The intelligence work conducted in Sweden was not only a contribution to the Allied cause, but also a way for the officers to reclaim their lost honour and demonstrate professional relevance in the war effort.

British officials frequently praised the high quality of the material.[14] Yet it does not appear to have been put to much operational use. When one of the intelligence officers travelled from Stockholm to London in October 1943, he discovered that many of the intelligence reports were lying unused in a closet.[15] As late as December 1944, the officers expressed their frustrations to the British about how their work seemed to have little impact. One officer noted:"This sounds a little bitter, and it is. It cannot be denied that, especially among the people working in the field, there is a certain despondency, because one does not feel that our work is being applied in practice." Another added: "One receives recognition in words, but misses seeing the work put to use in practice."[16] The main reason for this was probably that the British did not demand detailed intelligence on Denmark, which, for obvious reasons, was a low priority until the final stages of the war. So, to some extent in operational terms, the intelligence work amounted to another moral defeat. Yet, the significance of the intelligence work cannot be assessed solely by its operational impact. In the post-war contest over honour and legitimacy, the importance of the reports lay less in their wartime effect and more in what they could later be shown to represent, namely ongoing diligence, activity and loyalty to the Allied cause.

## THE AFTERMATH OF THE WAR

In the immediate aftermath of the war, resistance fighters were widely celebrated as heroes and hailed in films, newspaper articles, and resistance memoirs.[17] At the same time, politicians were successful in situating their own wartime conduct within the emerging narrative of total national resistance. Cooperation was interpreted through the "Sword and Shield" thesis, according to which the government's policy had created the conditions that allowed the resistance movement to operate.[18] "The fight over honour," as former members of the resistance named it, was being fought. Politicians also began to voice direct criticisms of the resistance movement.[19] One of the most sensitive issues of the occupation was the liquidation of German informers. The Social Democratic chief ideologue, Hartvig Frisch, stated that the killings carried out towards the end of the war had been outright murders and had nothing to do with the liberation struggle.[20]

The criticism of the resistance movement was less about the movement itself than it was about the politicians' own conduct during the occupation. Having distanced themselves from armed resistance and chosen to cooperate with the German authorities, they now needed to restore their own honour and, more importantly, their political legitimacy. The editor-in-chief of the formerly illegal news agency *Information*, Børge Outze, gave a name to the politicians' attempts to discredit and diminish the resistance—"the countermovement,".[21] The politicians largely won the battle of reclaiming their honour, and in the official narrative of the occupation that was constructed in the years after the war, it was a united Denmark consisting only of freedom fighters that stood against the Nazis. All Danes, high and low, men and women, politicians and resistance fighters alike, had, at heart, been members of the resistance. They had merely been waiting for the right moment to express their opposition in word and in action. This narrative rescued Denmark's self-understanding and underpinned its sense of honour against the trauma of a long and humiliating occupation. In their study of the occupation as a "collective memory", the historians Claus Bryld and Anette Warring refer to this consensus narrative as "the basic narrative."[22] The historian Hans Kirchhoff has taken a more polemical stance, describing this narrative as "the great myth of the Danish people in battle."[23]

However, this expansive narrative coexisted with sharp and sustained criticisms, particularly of the officer corps. In the eyes of the public, the army's reputation had been "seriously burdened", as a contemporary source described it, by its weak performance on 9 April 1940 and 29 August 1943.[24] After the war, the military leaders remained targets of public criticism. Unlike the politicians, they

had no official channels through which to reframe the past as it was presented to the public and they found themselves trapped in a narrative they could not easily alter. Moreover, the totality of the Danish defence and army structure had been fundamentally disrupted during the occupation and would have to be rebuilt from scratch.[25]

Some of the criticism came from former resistance members, who argued that the army had been too passive throughout the occupation. The Army Chief, General Ebbe Gørtz, became a central target. He was criticised for failing to issue orders to fight on 9 April 1940, for his unwavering loyalty to the political leadership, and for his refusal to cooperate with the resistance movement before 29 August 1943. He was also blamed for allowing the Germans to seize the army's weapons and equipment and, finally, for failing to carry out a thorough purge of compromised officers after liberation. According to the Swedish military attaché in Copenhagen, the Danish military leadership had become "somewhat suspect in the eyes of the public" because of its conduct during the occupation. He observed that the criticism was voiced by representatives of the resistance movement, by the press, and by various political factions.[26]

A recurring and particularly damaging line of criticism concerned the extent of Nazi sympathies that was rampant within the officer corps. This was not merely a matter of rumours or speculation. A considerable number of officers, especially among the younger cohorts, had been enamoured by and attracted to Nazi ideology in the early years of the war as many had joined one of the Danish Nazi parties. Membership records from the largest of these parties, the Danish Nationalist Socialist Worker Party (DNSAP), listed 21 first lieutenants, 32 second lieutenants, 32 captains, and 16 sub-lieutenants.[27] In addition to these figures, the reserve officers and enlisted personnel must be added, and the actual figures are likely even higher, because the DNSAP reportedly maintained secret membership lists of officers before the war even began.[28] A contemporary report noted "a certain unease" within the Danish military as the purge of compromised officers unfolded. It also observed that investigations into compromised personnel were themselves roadblocks to the effective training of new personnel and the effective fighting capability of the armed forces.[29]

While most ordinary Danes were unaware of these affiliations during the occupation, several public incidents involving Danish officers expressing sympathy for Nazism later came to haunt the officer corps. In the immediate postwar years, a flood of publications about "the five evil years" appeared, and in many of them, the officers were criticised harshly. One example of this was

seen in the issue *5 Aar. Besættelsen i Billeder* (5 Years: The Occupation in Photographs), which reprinted numerous images of Danish officers who had joined the DNSAP's military unit, the Free Corps Denmark. Another influential work was *Besættelsestidens Fakta: Dokumentarisk Haandbog* (Facts of the Occupation: A Documentary Handbook), published in 1945. Spanning almost 1,600 pages, it compiled laws, decrees, and official statements made by officials during the occupation period. It was intended as a reference work for courts and lawyers in possible trials concerning harmful conduct perpetrated by the enemies of the state, whomever they might be. The handbook documented that several senior army officers had been prominent figures in the segments of Danish Nazism.

The criticism reached new heights in January 1946, when chairman of the youth section in the Danish Social Liberal Party, Erik Jørgensen, gave an interview to *Hjemmeværnet*. This publication was the membership magazine of the Danish Home Guard, and here Erik declared that the officer corps constituted one of the most compromised segments of the Danish population.[30] This publication and in extension the remark was primarily aimed at former resistance members, only exacerbating the problematic relations between the officer corps and resistance veterans which was already deeply strained. Gørtz attempted to persuade Jørgensen to withdraw the statement, but when he refused by insisting that he spoke the truth, Gørtz initiated a defamation lawsuit against him on behalf of the army. The Chief of the Navy later joined the case.

Instead of restoring the honour of the officer corps, the trial deepened the crisis. When the case reached the courts in September 1946, the defence and Jørgensen had little difficulty substantiating their claims. A comprehensive overview prepared by the Ministry of War showed that of the 691 serving line officers in the army, 61 had either died in German service, been dismissed for Nazi collaboration, or faced disciplinary proceedings. Among reserve and reinforcement officers, 68 out of 619 fell into the same categories, corresponding to roughly ten per cent in both groups.[31] The defence further cited well-documented cases of Danish officers acting in leadership positions within the Free Corps Denmark, as well as a pro-Nazi pamphlet written by senior officers during the occupation.[32]

Even before the trial began, the case attracted intense media attention. The newspaper *Friheden* published the names of all 69 officers listed in the DNSAP membership register, while the communist daily *Land og Folk* went further by publishing the names of the 180 officers who were identified in Nazi and resistance archives as having pro-German affiliations.[33] Gørtz himself was singled out and criticised , not least because of his participation in a parade welcoming

back the Free Corps Denmark from the front in October 1942. During the trial, Gørtz was also questioned about his contact and connections to the Danish Nazi Party. He explained that in 1939, he had commented on a draft army bill submitted by the leader of the DNSAP Frits Clausen, because Clausen was a member of the Danish Parliament at the time.[34] In later statements to the press, however, this episode was reframed. The contact was now presented as having served an intelligence purpose, allowing the General Staff to investigate possible collaboration between Nazi activists and circles within the officer corps. In December, the issue was raised in parliament, where the Minister of Defence defended Gørtz and supported this interpretation.[35] In this way, the episode also suggested a distinction between the officers in the intelligence service and the other individuals of the officer corps who were suspected of political malfeasance.

Although Erik Jørgensen was ultimately convicted of defamation and fined, the real losers were probably still the officers themselves. The trial exposed the extent of compromise within the officer corps and inflicted a profound loss of face. All the documents, the stenographic records of the trial, and the final judgment, were published in book form before the end of that same year.[36]

The officers were acutely aware of the damage that had been wrought. Having already suffered repeated humiliations during the war, they now faced sustained public criticism that questioned their loyalty, honour, and legitimacy. For the intelligence officers, the Gørtz case served as a warning of how struggles over documents and public exposure could rapidly undermine institutional authority and personal legitimacy.

### INTERNAL FRACTURES IN THE OFFICER CORPS

It is important to stress that the officer corps was far from homogeneous. Relations between different groups within the officer corps remained immensely strained after the war. Many argued that an extensive purge was necessary, if the army was to regain public trust. In accordance with a law passed on 25 May 1945, officers who had served in German military units were dismissed from service outright. For many, however, this measure did not go far enough. In July 1945, the Minister of Defence, Ole Bjørn Kraft, convened a meeting at the Ministry of War in order to discuss the future of the armed forces. Present were the leadership of the resistance movement in Copenhagen, the Army Chief, Ebbe Gørtz, and several officers who had themselves been active in the resistance. During the meeting, Kraft asked the officer and resistance leader A. R. Jørgensen how the Copenhagen leadership viewed a proposed purge of the army. Jørgensen argued

that, if the military were to regain respect among the population, the officers who had fled to Sweden needed to have their career advancement opportunities curtailed. Other possibilities were suggested but Gørtz ultimately rejected this view.[37]

Similar tensions surfaced in the case of Colonel Helge Bennike, who also believed that the purge was proceeding far too slowly. Shortly after liberation, Bennike wrote to Gørtz, arguing that all officers who had supported Nazism should be dismissed from service. Gørtz responded sharply. He interpreted Bennike's intervention as a breach of discipline and removed him from his position as commander of the Border Command.[38] Gørtz was unwilling to punish officers for having been members of the Danish Nazi Party (DNSAP). In a memorandum to the Ministry of War dated 4 October 1945, he explained that the German invasion had come as a profound shock to the officer corps. Many, especially among the younger cohorts of the officer corps, had become deeply frustrated with what they perceived as a political system that had failed them. The DNSAP had exploited this discontent through a proposed army law, which appealed to younger officers and: "... in some cases, was followed by party membership."[39] The explanation framed the political compromise made by these officers as a transient reaction to the government's neglect of the army and to institutional collapse.

Conflicts over authority were particularly acute within the intelligence service. After fleeing to Sweden in October 1943, the head of the section, Einar Nordentoft, remained head of the service in an informal capacity. Still, his control over the domestic network that continued to operate inside of Denmark was, in practice, limited. This led to a post-war conflict with Svend Schjødt-Eriksen, who had served as General Gørtz's right-hand man during the war and who considered himself as the leader of the domestic intelligence service.[40] Although Nordentoft ultimately prevailed and regained control of the section, the relationship between the two men remained damaged. It was not merely organisational authority that was at stake, but control over how the wartime intelligence work would be defined, documented, and remembered after the war.

One manifestation of this struggle was the intelligence service's involvement in publishing the DNSAP membership register shortly after the war.[41] The card index showed that Schjødt-Eriksen had been a party member for a brief period of time, as had many other officers. A disciplinary case was opened against him, but it led nowhere. His membership had apparently lasted only a few months, and there was no evidence that he had ever paid any dues or participated in party activities. He did not appear to have been a committed Nazi, either in word or in action.[42] Yet, the episode illustrates a broader pattern. By emphasising cases

of political compromise within the officer corps, the intelligence service was able to draw a line between itself and the other compromised parts of the military because of their association with Nazism. The distinction allowed officers conducting intelligence work to be separated from the failures and political entanglements of officers in the regular armed forces. Accusations of political compromise were used as ammunition in struggles over claiming authority and to secure promotion, as well as in the efforts to redefine the boundaries of the entire institution.

Tensions were also evident within the relatively small circle of intelligence officers themselves. Hans Lunding, who had remained in Denmark in the fall of 1943 and was arrested and imprisoned in Germany, appears to have harboured a deep resentment towards his colleagues who escaped to Sweden. At least this was how he was portrayed by fellow his officer Per Winkel, who claimed that after the war, Lunding: "... harboured a profound disgust for everything connected with the intelligence service after 29 August 1943; in particular, I believe he despised all those intelligence officers who had left Denmark and sought refuge in Sweden."[43] Whether or not this assessment fully captures Lunding's actual sentiments, it points to the depth of post-war resentments and to the moral fault lines that continued to divide officers who had experienced the war in radically different ways.

Taken together, these internal conflicts reveal that the rehabilitation of the officer corps would never be a unified nor uncontested exercise. These conflicts revolved around access to documents, authority, and the right to shape the historical record. In doing so, they laid much of the groundwork for the later consolidation of the interpretation that framed exile, secrecy, and institutional continuity as essential contributions to the national cause.

## REMEMBERING INTELLIGENCE

As mentioned, the officers of the intelligence service were criticised for fleeing to Sweden and abandoning the service.[44] In general, however, the intelligence service attracted relatively little attention in the first years following the war. Intelligence work, by its covert nature, takes place in the shadows, and only a few people knew what the intelligence officers had done during the German occupation.

The first comprehensive attempt to write the history of Danish wartime intelligence came from the historian Jørgen Hæstrup. A former resistance member himself, Hæstrup began toiling with historical research in the late 1940s in

response to what he perceived as an unjust political critique of the resistance movement.[45] As most relevant archives remained closed, Jørgen Hæstrup based his early works primarily on interviews and testimonies collected from resistance fighters and officers. In Hæstrup's influential accounts, Danish intelligence officers occupied a privileged position. They had already, in the autumn of 1940, defied the government's policy of cooperation and established intelligence links with Britain. In the fall of 1943, they moved to Sweden to continue their intelligence work. Hæstrup argued that these initiatives had preserved Denmark's honour and contributed to its recognition as an Allied nation. His account foregrounded disciplined and foresighted intelligence work, while giving little space to communist resistance activities and emphasising British-backed networks.[46] Hæstrup did not operate in isolation. Ebbe Munck, who had been the intelligence officers' representative in Stockholm, acted as an informal adviser on Hæstrup's project, commenting on drafts and proposing amendments.[47] As is so often the case when memoirs and testimonies dominate the source base, the narrative ended up closely reflecting the protagonists' own self-understanding.

For the intelligence officers, Hæstrup's works carried particular weight. They provided an authoritative framework through which exile and secrecy could be interpreted as purposeful and legitimate service. In the years that followed, the officers took considerable precautions to protect this interpretation. Central to this effort was their control of the wartime intelligence archive, known as the Stockholm Archive, which remained closed to most people. Tensions surfaced in the early 1970s when Lieutenant Colonel Helge Klint sought access to the archive.[48] Klint was not an outsider. He headed the Army Staff's Military History Section, taught at the University of Copenhagen, and had himself served in the Danish intelligence service in Sweden during the war. Klint took a different position. He believed that Hæstrup had overstated the importance of the intelligence service and portrayed the intelligence officers too heroically, whereas others, including Schjødt-Eriksen, were portrayed in a more antagonistic light in the narrative.[49] When Hæstrup's two-volume book *Hemmelig alliance* (Secret Alliance) was published in 1959, they indeed played a role in Schjødt-Eriksen being passed over for promotion to major general.[50]

Klint's request for access was denied. Instead, two young historians were granted controlled access to the material under the supervision of Jørgen Hæstrup. One of them was Hans Christian Bjerg, who wrote about the intelligence service's activities during the five years of occupation. The task was given to Bjerg with a clause stipulating that the army chiefs retained the right, on "security

grounds," to reject the manuscripts if the results did not meet their expectations.[51] Drafts circulated among former intelligence officers, particularly P. A. Mørch and Per Winkel, who suggested several revisions and deletions. As Winkel put it, the aim was to ensure "the most correct, truthful, historical description," which in practice meant safeguarding the officers' own version of events.[52] The two-volume work, *Ligaen* (The League), reiterated much of the established narrative.

Although *Ligaen* was well received in the press, academic historians were sharply critical of the work. Bjerg was accused of adopting an outdated, heroic perspective and of grossly overestimating the intelligence service's importance.[53] This was also partly evident in the studies conducted by Knud J. V. Jespersen, published in the late 1990s and early 2000s.[54] Jespersen introduced greater nuance to the story, not least by emphasising the officers' anti-communist motivations. Still, he explicitly presented his work as a continuation of Jørgen Hæstrup's interpretation, now supplemented by British archival material.[55] It is noteworthy that Jespersen, whose scholarly background lay primarily in early modern history, was encouraged to take on the subject by Jørgen Hæstrup himself and by Ole Lippmann, the former head of the Danish SOE agents.[56] Their involvement underlines the degree to which the historiography of wartime intelligence developed in close dialogue with its former practitioners.

The most recent addition to the discourse within this field is Trine Engholm Michelsen's book about the officers' secretary Jutta Graae: *Storfyrstinden: besættelsens magtfulde, men ukendte frihedskæmper Jutta Graae* (The Grand Duchess: the occupation's powerful but unknown freedom fighter, Jutta Graae), published in 2021.[57] Michelsen's book, as its predecessors, received positive reviews in the press and is a continuation of the heroic narrative tradition within this field, in which the small but clever Danes outwit the large but foolish Germans. A central difference to her approach is the shift in protagonist and the gendered framing, with Graae occupying the role previously reserved for male officers.

Taken together, the historiography illustrates how the intelligence officers' wartime actions were reinterpreted over time. This process rested on memoirs, interviews, selective archival access, and close collaboration and interaction with a limited group of historians. Far from being marginalised, they came to occupy a privileged symbolic position in the historical narrative of the occupation.

## CONCLUSION

This chapter has traced how Danish military intelligence officers sought to reposition themselves in the aftermath of German occupation and Danish defeat. In

this sense, the struggle over their reputation was not fought within the arenas of public memory but rather it was shaped by the institutional conditions under which history about the occupation was written. During and immediately after the war, the officer corps faced sustained public criticism for its wartime conduct or lack thereof. For intelligence officers, exile in Sweden intensified this predicament. In the post-war period, flight, secrecy, and institutional continuity were difficult to reconcile with the prevailing ideas of honour that centred on visible resistance and sacrifice. For many officers, reintegration into the post-war order was uncertain and uneven. It did not follow automatically at the end of the war, but it gradually took shape through disagreements over how the occupation should be interpreted and over who could legitimately speak with authority about it. By reading through Koposov's concept of "memory wars", the Danish case suggests that the struggles over the legitimacy of the past found herein were not primarily fought over through legislation or the courts, but through control of archival access, documentation, and historical authority. In this sense, the rehabilitation of the intelligence officers illustrates a form of memory war fought within the production of historical knowledge itself, where access to archives and historiographical authority became decisive factors in determining the outcome.

In this context, memoirs, interviews, and the handling of archival material became particularly significant. They allowed wartime conduct to be framed without accountability or recourse to open and fair criticism. From this perspective, the experience of the intelligence officers also speaks to a broader aspect of post-war resocialisation. The reconstruction of democratic authority after 1945 did not only concern resistance fighters and collaborators. It also involved re-establishing legitimacy for elements of the pre-war elite whose positions had been weakened by the occupation. In Denmark, this took place through legal measures and purges, as well as through slower measures, including more gradual disputes over interpretation and institutional continuity.