

# 1

## German or Nazi Antisemitism?

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Until the 1960s most studies of the Nazi Party and National Socialism argued that antisemitism was an essential factor in explaining Nazi success before 1933.<sup>1</sup> But in recent decades, numerous studies have shown that antisemitism was probably somewhat underrepresented in Nazi Party activity and propaganda in the period before 1933, particularly in the last years before Hitler became Chancellor. Today, most studies agree that although a hardcore of radical antisemites existed within the party, most members avoided engaging in antisemitic activity. Millions of Nazi voters did not cast their vote for the party because they were antisemites. They were prepared to accept the Nazi Party's 1920 programme, including the antisemitic paragraph, only if the party offered them bread, jobs and hope for the future.

A discussion of this absence of antisemitic propaganda, activity and motives forms the core of this chapter. From an historiographical perspective I will address the following question: What was the relationship between Nazi ideological factors and rational motives, between hatred of Jews and economic distress, between the importance of race within the Nazi policy and political motives?

The chapter focuses on the historiography of Nazi antisemitism in the period from the late 1920s to the early 1930s for several reasons. First, most studies investigating the Nazis' rise to power deal with the period 1929–33 separately because of its importance in the history of the Weimar Republic, the Nazi Party and the history of German and Nazi antisemitism. Second, it was at this point that the Nazi Party became a mass political body. In those years, the party gained strength and popularity in Germany thanks to an unprecedented and innovative use of propaganda and ideology. So it is of interest to examine how antisemitism was incorporated into the party's propaganda and ideology, what part it played and, since this is the focus of this essay, how historians have studied this. Third, most studies dealing with the Nazis' consolidation of power after 1933 end with the years 1934–35. This reflects not only the foreign and internal

policies of the Third Reich, but also a fact that is relevant to our study: from the mid-1930s Nazi policy against the Jews can be understood as ‘a gradually radicalizing process’,<sup>2</sup> as a racist, antisemitic tone became a pivotal element of the Third Reich’s ideology and propaganda. From the mid-1930s German and Nazi antisemitism entered a new phase – ‘the road to extermination’ – which is discussed in this volume by other contributors.

## I

When discussing German antisemitism, most scholars agree that before the First World War one can speak in terms of the rise and fall of political, organized antisemitism in Germany. Contrary to Daniel J. Goldhagen’s controversial thesis of an ‘eliminationist antisemitism’ prevalent in Germany in the nineteenth century,<sup>3</sup> most researchers accept the oft-repeated argument that before the First World War Germany was not an antisemitic country, and that there was no such thing as a homogeneous, national German antisemitism. That does not mean that hatred of Jews did not exist, but it was local, lasted for relatively short periods and served the interests of particular social groups. The absence of any dominant cultural hegemony, any single political culture in Germany, largely explains the limitations on the spread of antisemitism.<sup>4</sup> One should also consider the assumption that prior to the First World War a taboo, based on middle-class mores, existed against certain forms of antisemitism, and that only the war and post-1918 conditions undermined this, so that the taboo lost its potency.<sup>5</sup> All this explains why widespread antisemitism did not exist as a dominant force in Germany in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The ‘restless Reich’, the ‘nervous Reich’<sup>6</sup> was riddled with cultural and, especially, religious contradictions. These contradictions and differences in the socioeconomic traditions in the various parts of Germany played a decisive role in limiting the scope of German antisemitism.

During the First World War the first signs of a relocation of German antisemitism appeared. From being a strong, local (peripheral) phenomenon, which sometimes had a racial character, with limited objectives, and which benefited certain social groups in the provinces, it became a national phenomenon. The first step took place in the political arena. The German Fatherland Party (*Deutsche Vaterlandspartei*), a right-wing antisemitic party which came into being during the First World War, as a result of the union of the various conservative, antisemitic, racial forces in Germany, preached an antisemitic racial ideology in the latter part of the war.<sup>7</sup> The party provided the conceptual and organizational model for all the antisemitic and nationalist movements that arose after the war, and was led by figures like Wolfgang Kapp and Heinrich Class, who made a decisive contribution to undermining the legitimacy of the Weimar Republic in its formative stages. Despite their dislike of Hitler, if we

wish to examine the sources of Weimar Nazi antisemitism and the question of continuity in German antisemitism, we have to begin with this party, its leaders, the First World War and the German revolution of 1918 when the party took a central role on the radical-right spectrum of the new political map.

## II

This being the case before and during the First World War, before we turn to Nazi antisemitism, we need to ask the following questions: At what point can we say that antisemitism became a central pillar of Weimar society? When did German antisemitism change from being an undercurrent, a marginal or local phenomenon, to being central in German society? I will highlight a variety of processes and outline a number of arguments which prevail today among most historians who study German society and the role of antisemitism during the Weimar period, especially in its final years. These arguments serve as a starting-point for any discussion of Nazi antisemitism.

There are a number of points at which researchers begin their discussions of the rise of Nazi antisemitism. The first is the First World War and its social, political and economic consequences (1916–23). There is no doubt that the decisive turning point that saw antisemitism break out of its minority position occurred between the last years of the war and 1923. The second is German inflation and its legacy (1923–26). And the third – and the focus of this chapter – the final stage, which led to the appointment of Hitler as Chancellor (1929–33). I will examine these stages from an historiographical perspective.

### 1

From the 1880s onwards, sociopolitical peripheries developed in Germany, which were characterized by social protest actions and, in some regions, a desire for radical-democratic reform. These populist manifestations, most commonly expressed by artisans and peasants, but to some extent by other social groups, were a hotbed of local antisemitism in the 1890s.

As we have noted, the formation of the Fatherland Party can be seen as an indication of the rise of a national, sometimes homogeneous, antisemitic political culture. Immediately after the First World War, some of the pre-war antisemitic peripheries provided fertile soil for the growth of radical antisemitic mass movements, such as the German-Nationalist Protection and Defence Association (*Deutschvölkischer Schutz- und Trutz-Bund*), whose members were mainly professional salaried workers, teachers and civil servants.<sup>8</sup> The period 1916–24 with its difficult political, psychological, social and especially economic conditions, was of particular significance for the rise of German mass antisemitism.<sup>9</sup> The frequent crises of the Weimar Republic contributed more than anything else to the dehumanization of German society and its elites.<sup>10</sup>

Here, some researchers' main concern is with antisemitism in political language and discourse.<sup>11</sup> They show how the post-1918 period saw the widespread infiltration of antisemitic language and arguments into political discourse. In the political culture, with the exceptions of the German Democratic Party and the German Social Democrat Party, which were opposed to antisemitism, all groups (including the German Communist Party) employed antisemitic rhetoric, whether moderate or radical, to mobilize existing and new supporters and to undermine political rivals.<sup>12</sup> In religious life, the Protestant and Catholic Churches played an important role in this process. It was mainly the Protestant Church which remained firmly in the *völkisch* camp, although it rejected extreme antisemitism. Many pastors and vicars of the Church belonged to the Nazi Party. The Catholic Church, by contrast, rejected radical and *völkisch* antisemitism, but articulated time and again its sympathy for the nationalist camp. There is no doubt that the Catholic Church was ambivalent about Nazi antisemitism. On the one hand, priests continued to employ antisemitic images and express prejudices in their sermons and festive rituals and services. Violent Nazi anti-communist activity impressed many Church leaders in Germany and Rome and led in some Catholic regions to massive support for the Nazi Party. On the other hand, the Church could not support the pagan aspects of Nazi Party ideology. The bishops of Mainz clearly expressed this dissatisfaction in their declaration of 1930.<sup>13</sup>

It was above all the so-called 'golden twenties' which witnessed the gradual assimilation of antisemitic discourse.<sup>14</sup> Jacob Borut, who has studied Jewish vacations and the antisemitism encountered by Jews in tourist facilities during the Weimar period, shows many cases of antisemitic occurrences, proving that Jews could not escape antisemitism even on holiday. According to Borut, although there were hundreds of antisemitic hotels and guesthouses which refused to accept Jewish holidaymakers, this did not stop Jews visiting antisemitic resorts.<sup>15</sup> Recently, a number of studies have explained this phenomenon by saying that the German notion of the *Volk* underwent a gradual change after 1918, and especially after 1923. In the course of this transformation, the significance and importance of antisemitism were modified.<sup>16</sup> More importantly, those for whom antisemitism had never been a way of life started to adopt antisemitic jargon or joined the antisemitic camp. What happened, in short, was that an alliance was formed between racism and respectability.<sup>17</sup>

It is important to stress that Jews were not the only victims of the German moral collapse. The communists, workers affiliated to the organizations of the left and the French were among the groups for whom the German right manifested a deep hatred.<sup>18</sup> Recent studies remind us that the 'Jewish Question' was not the main concern of the majority of people in rural or urban Germany. Other concerns, such as inflation, the social upheavals of the 1930s, street violence and the horrific stories coming out of the Soviet Union (to note but

a few) were also important, perhaps more so than hatred of the Jews. By concentrating disproportionately on antisemitism we overlook the collective preoccupations of Germans after the First World War. The atmosphere of violence on the streets of the Weimar Republic overshadowed antisemitism.<sup>19</sup>

## 2

Many scholars today agree that the hyper-inflation of the years 1922–23 resulted not only in money losing its value, but also in a devaluation of human life.<sup>20</sup> The national humiliation, the defeat of Germany, the astronomical sums the Germans were forced to pay in reparations, the sense of insecurity and the massive unemployment which overtook Germany towards the end of the 1920s, the great fear of the extreme left and the almost continual atmosphere of civil war undermined the civil foundations, bourgeois values (*Tugend*) and Christian morality that had hitherto characterized various strata of German society. The unremitting atmosphere of violence and civil war under Weimar (mainly until 1924) was also, as Dirk Walter and Richard Bessel remind us, starting to produce public expressions of antisemitism.<sup>21</sup> In Berlin and Munich, street fighting between right-wing organizations and the radical left was common in the early 1920s. Many Jews, mainly *Ostjuden* (Jews from eastern Europe who fled to Germany during or after the war), were a popular target for the paramilitary organizations of the radical right. Here, perhaps, is a partial explanation of the origins of the cruelty described by Goldhagen of the mass killings in eastern Europe after 1940.<sup>22</sup>

## 3

Even in the late Weimar period it is hard to discover a direct line leading to the changed attitude towards the Jews expressed in the Nazi Party, German elites and society some years later. After 1924 the aggressive antisemitism of the radical right declined in popularity.<sup>23</sup> True, many Germans were now more amenable to manipulation from above, to the attraction of a false magician or to being drawn into violent activities. Small businessmen, doctors, intellectuals, students and university teachers are cited in recent studies as playing a decisive role in this regard.<sup>24</sup>

Geoffrey Giles, who focuses on the Nazi student organization in Hamburg, reminds us that antisemitism appears to have been one of the students' main preoccupations. In Marburg, argues Rudy Koshar, where traditions of political antisemitism were strong, the local Nazi student organization devoted most of its energy to fighting Judaism and 'Jewish finance capital'.<sup>25</sup> Ulrich Herbert, in his important study on the young, right-wing intellectual and SS officer Werner Best, argued that radical 'Folkism' was dominant among the academic youth of the bourgeoisie. Best, a university-trained lawyer, joined the Nazi Party in 1930 and the SS in 1931. For Herbert, Best is an example of a young intellectual

whose worldview had been fixed during the early Weimar years when the threat from communism and the humiliation of the Versailles Treaty had their impact on a whole generation of intellectuals. Their anti-republican ideology, antisemitism and anti-Marxism were expressed in their activities in right-wing antisemitic university circles. Those circles provided the soil from which grew the Nazi terror and genocide of the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>26</sup> Finally, Michael Kater reminds us that after 1929, when competition with Jewish doctors became more intense, the Nazi organization of doctors, the *Nationalsozialistischer Deutscher Ärztebund*, which represented the interests of several groups of German physicians, radicalized its antisemitism.<sup>27</sup>

On the other hand, many historians remind us that the Nazi Party did not especially hate the Jews. Its members and sympathizers had many enemies and many objects of attack, of whom the Jews were only one. It was undoubtedly an antisemitic party, but the antisemitism of its members before 1933 is insufficient to account for what happened from the mid-1930s onwards. It was still largely a 'written antisemitism' rather than a violent one.<sup>28</sup>

The classic studies on the history of the Nazi Party written during the 1950s and the 1960s which analyse the stages of the party's rise to power disregard almost completely Nazi antisemitism during the decisive period, even though they emphasize that antisemitic propaganda was used by the Nazi Party until 1924, and of course from 1933 onwards. These historians, mostly Jews who lived through the period under discussion (1950s and 1960s), focused their research efforts on the study of German Jews before and after 1933, and on Nazi ideology and the state. However, having recognized the importance of Nazi antisemitism, they failed to examine the varieties of its articulation in pre-1933 Nazi propaganda, apparently in the belief that the issue was beyond doubt. Even the serious scholarly controversy at that time over the question of whether the Nazi regime should be regarded as fascist or totalitarian did not attempt to touch on the character of Nazi antisemitism before or after 1933.<sup>29</sup>

During the 1970s and the 1980s a shift took place in the historiography of the Nazi Party which was reflected in studies of Nazi antisemitism. Several historiographical trends should be mentioned here. From the late 1970s more and more studies concentrated on aspects of regional, local and everyday life during the rise of the Nazi Party. These studies received a tremendous impetus from various school competitions on the topic of 'The Third Reich in my Home Town', and from the events marking the fiftieth anniversary of the Nazi *Machtergreifung* (seizure of power). Both German and non-German researchers worked on this regional aspect. The regional aspect was part of an extremely popular trend at that time, known as 'history from below' (*Geschichte von unten*), which found its most extreme expression in the trend known as 'history of everyday life' (*Alltagsgeschichte*). Here too antisemitism before 1933 is treated as a marginal issue by both German and Anglo-American researchers or does not figure in their

work at all. Many German researchers were natives of the places they studied and it may be that they feared their neighbours' reactions. Others – many of whom were 'historians of everyday life' during the 1980s – were Marxists or at least held a worldview that was close to Marxism, an ideology that traditionally rejects antisemitism as an explanatory analytical tool because it was, supposedly, a factor diverting the attention of the masses from their real problems.<sup>30</sup>

The main historical trend that emerged in Germany as well as in Britain and the United States in the 1970s and 1980s was social history or, in Germany, the 'social history of politics'. This trend sought to explain historical processes and events in terms of social structures, social groups and socio-economic processes. This too might explain the relegation of antisemitism to the periphery of Nazi activity. Many historians argued that the reason why antisemitic propaganda was not often used by the Nazi Party was a tactical change in emphasis in party activity (the post-1929 wooing of social groups who were not traditionally known as antisemitic); the influence of local traditions on the party's methods (e.g. the size of the Protestant, Catholic or Jewish communities in the region under investigation); and finally the elevation of Marxism-Bolshevism to the position of enemy number 1 of the Nazi Party.<sup>31</sup>

During the 1980s, analysis of voting patterns for the Nazi Party, its members and organizations also became popular. However, here too none of the studies dwelt at any length on how antisemitism affected the considerations of party activists, members or voters. The most common view was that until 1933 the struggle against communism and Marxism was the principal preoccupation of the party voters. Thomas Childers argued that, on comparing the period up to 1925 with the phase beginning with the end of the 1920s, a downward trend in antisemitic activity and propaganda is evident. Richard Hamilton and Jürgen Falter, who, like Childers, studied voting patterns for the Nazi Party, very briefly supported Childers' arguments. They argued that antisemitism would emerge as an issue only when questions of capitalism and Bolshevism were raised. Racism played no role in voters' considerations or in the party's appeals to them. All these studies argued that the resort to antisemitism was grounded in regional factors.<sup>32</sup>

Two scholarly controversies that characterized the period should be mentioned here. The debate about Nazism and the Third Reich as 'Hitlerism' (the 'intentionalist' approach) or as 'polycracy' (the 'structuralist' approach) concentrated mainly on structures and the intentions of the Nazi leaders, elites and agencies. The role of antisemitism was one of the main issues here. It was again the period after 1933 that stood at the centre of the debate while pre-1933 Nazi antisemitism was again overlooked.<sup>33</sup> The German historian Ulrich Herbert, who represents the structuralist approach, still argues in favour of this approach, which seeks to 'set the causes and effect of the National Socialist policy of mass destruction in a different, sharper and simultaneously broader

focus' from that of the 'intentionalists'. On the other hand, Herbert accepts that this approach lacks any consideration of crucial ideological elements which influenced Nazi policy towards the Jews.<sup>34</sup>

Another debate among West German historians took place in the 1980s. This was the *Historikerstreit* (historians' debate) and revolved, among other things, around the issue of antisemitism and the Holocaust. Ernst Nolte's irresponsible argument about the impact of the Bolshevik Revolution and Stalinist Russia on the German middle classes, the Nazi Party and its leadership drew attention to the place of antisemitism and the Jews in Nazi ideology and activity prior to 1933. But here too, the debate focused on the period after 1933, while important questions such as whether before 1933 the party drew any distinction between Marxism and Judaism in its propaganda were left unanswered or, under the influence of Nolte's arguments, communism and Marxism were described as the arch-enemies of Nazism before 1933.<sup>35</sup>

The historiographical approach to the Nazi Party's antisemitism did not change much until the Goldhagen debate of the mid-1990s. In Germany, as well as in the US, public debate over National Socialist antisemitism has changed significantly since then. Goldhagen understands the mass murder of European Jews as the culmination of a centuries-long German obsession with Judaism. In his study, Nazi antisemitism was a German project that began long before the 1920s. He shows how rabid Nazi antisemitism, which developed during the 1920s, had deeper roots in German society. He pointed out that before 1933 any Jew in Germany could expect the worst from Hitler's party. Goldhagen's thesis about the Nazi Party's antisemitism was in fact a return to 1960s' arguments about the importance of antisemitism to the success of the Nazi Party, but he stresses this fact more than any other scholar, including those who wrote about Nazi ideology and propaganda during the 1960s. As in the case with the 'Hitlerism' versus 'Polycracy' debate or the *Historikerstreit*, the public discussion arising from Goldhagen's arguments totally ignored his thesis about pre-1933 antisemitism. Apart from minor remarks such as 'after 1930, the election propaganda of the rising National-Socialists mentioned antisemitism only peripherally',<sup>36</sup> no serious discussion developed around Goldhagen's argument about pre-1933 antisemitism in the way that debates developed around his argument concerning post-1933 Nazi antisemitism.<sup>37</sup>

### III

The reason for the marginal role assigned to antisemitism in the Nazi Party in the studies and controversies surveyed above must also be sought in the methods used by historians, in the positions taken by various scholars and, so it appears, in the conditions in various regions of Germany. It is clear that notwithstanding the different methods employed by various historical approaches to this



issue, they all reach roughly the same conclusion: antisemitism did not play a major role in the rise of Nazism before 1933.

We can see several trends within this historiographical consensus which enable us to raise questions and arguments with regard to any future research on this topic. First, we should pay more attention to the distinction made by many historians between Nazi opposition to Marxism and the hatred of and opposition to the Jews. According to this view (which was not only represented by Nolte and his disciples),<sup>38</sup> the Nazis are claimed to have regarded Marxism as a 'political enemy'. Here the communists were seen as the arch-enemy of the Nazi Party, while the Jews did not constitute any threat to party members and leaders, and were treated as an 'ideological enemy'. Before the Nolte controversy of the 1980s, the 'communists as arch-enemy' approach was a domain of many Marxist or proto-Marxist historians, such as the late British historian Tim Mason, the German historian Reinhard Kühnl and many East German historians. Against this view, many conservative and liberal scholars argue that these two concepts ('Judaism' and 'communism') are coextensive, and that hatred of Marxism even derives from hatred of the Jewish worldview and morality.<sup>39</sup> In any research on this topic in the future, the meaning of the concepts 'communism' and 'Jewry' for the Nazi Party rank and file, and not only for the Nazi elite (Goebbels, Rosenberg, Hitler, Himmler, Heydrich) must be clarified, not just for the post-1933 period but also for the earlier period.

Second, the 'modified structuralism' approach to Nazism, which is currently the dominant approach in research on the Third Reich,<sup>40</sup> should expand the scope of its research to the period before 1933 by bringing under its scrutiny Nazi activity vis-à-vis the Jews in the Weimar period. Ulrich Herbert, who advocates this approach, suggests that the 1970s' structuralist approach was not aware of how important racist ideology and antisemitism were in determining the thoughts and actions of many sections of the German population and the Nazi Party. Herbert (in his study of Werner Best) and his colleagues take for granted a certain ideological framework in their analysis, but here too they do not take the Weimar period into consideration in their assessment of Nazi policy.<sup>41</sup>

Third, lack of attention to Nazi antisemitism prior to 1933 often stems from a preconception that since it is well known that the party was antisemitic and very often resorted to antisemitism, there is no need to dwell on this question for the period before 1933. Here one must raise the question why so many historians place such emphasis on the antisemitic trends of the party before 1924, while devoting only scant attention to this issue in the years that followed.

#### IV

Certainly, before 1933 neither the German people nor any group within the Nazi Party or its voters wanted what happened to the Jews after 1938. No doubt,

many sections within German society would have been satisfied with a visible restriction of Jewish influence. Only a minority within the Nazi Party itself (concentrated mainly around Julius Streicher and the *völkish* group in Bavaria), whom we can call rabidly anti-Jewish, contemplated a sweeping deprivation of civil rights, implemented, if necessary, by physical force. The vast majority of the Nazi Party's members and voters were indifferent and sometimes even rejected this rabid antisemitism.

But this broad attitude towards the Jews among Weimar society also enabled the minority of rabid antisemites in the Nazi Party to argue, after 1933, for racial discrimination and to act accordingly. Unlike the rank and file of the Nazi Party, however, a few of its leaders were imbued with a depraved anti-semitism of the racial kind to be found in certain intellectual circles of the early Weimar period. But the difference here was that these were precisely the people who, as a result of human error, were put in charge of the German state on 30 January 1933.

This point has to be borne in mind. Adolf Hitler, Heinrich Himmler, Josef Goebbels, Julius Streicher and their associates came to power as the result of a political manoeuvre of the traditional German right which, we may recall, was before the war already imbued with antisemitism. Unlike previous machinations of the German right, which had generally succeeded, that of 1933 failed and the golem turned on its maker.<sup>42</sup> The rise to power of the Nazis was not a foregone conclusion; it was not a case of historical necessity. There was no German 'special path' (*Sonderweg*) which began in the nineteenth century and led directly to 1933. On the contrary: some months before 'black January', the party had begun to break up, but the German elites who brought Hitler to power were corrupted, exhausted and unable to read the realities of the situation in Germany at the end of 1932 correctly.

The origins of Nazism, and hence Nazi antisemitism, lie in the crisis of Weimar society, which was reflected in a profound radicalization and politicization of that society. The radical populism which so typified the antisemitic peripheries in the period of the Second Reich gained a central position in the Weimar period as a result of the war, the revolution and the events of the early 1920s. Nazism was a general mart for all the social movements that had existed on the fringes of Wilhelmine society, had risen to prominence during the war and had become influential during the 1920s. But what was even more significant was that, in addition to the extremist currents that had infiltrated the party, Nazism in the period before 1933 also represented central streams of Wilhelmine society: national liberals, social Conservatism, Catholics and the socialist left. Democratic, conservative, liberal and Marxist ideas could be found within the party, together with calls for social and political reform under an authoritarian or populist democratic regime. And side by side with the racial antisemitism that had existed on the fringes of imperial society, the populist kind that was

prominent in the periphery and that found a home in the populist-radical-conservative parties of the Second Reich was also represented in the Nazi Party.<sup>43</sup>

This political department store made the Nazi regime popular, enabling it to carry out a social revolution. Unlike the German elites of the Second Reich and the Weimar Republic, National Socialism was able to exploit the great popularity it had gained in order to realize, among other things, its programme with regard to the Jews. The Nazi Party leadership was at the helm of a weary and enfeebled society which had lost much of its human face. Even more important, it had at its disposal intellectual and political elites which suffered from the same sickness. All were products of the Weimar crisis. The Nazi leaders, in collaboration with these elites, were able to mislead German society and mould it as a baker kneads and moulds his bread. This, of course, took time.

Most historians agree today that during the early years of the Third Reich 'the war against the Jews' was not the main goal of the new regime. Saul Friedländer argues that boycotts, 'spontaneous' grassroots action and legal actions were undertaken, but no more than that. The main task was to remove Jews from their positions in the state and the economy, but Jews could continue to live in Germany.<sup>44</sup> As late as 1936, a Jewish funeral in a village in the southern Rhine region in western Germany could be accompanied by the heads of the local Nazi Party who had come to pay their last respects to an anonymous Jew.<sup>45</sup> As Ulrich Herbert has recently claimed, the German people did not fanatically support anti-Jewish policy until the late 1930s.<sup>46</sup> As late as 1938, the heads of the SS could oppose *Kristallnacht* on the grounds that the disturbances might be too violent. But, as the Second World War reached its climax and the Germans were mired in the mud and snow of Russia, and the reverses of 1942 showed the Nazi leadership that victory was turning into defeat, the heads of the Nazi state took it on themselves to order the 'Final Solution of the Jewish Question' as well as cruel and vindictive actions against other social and ethnic groups.

## Notes

- 1 For this early period a good survey can be found in I. Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation* (London: Arnold, 2000), chapter 5; O.D. Kulka, 'Major Trends and Tendencies of German Historiography on National Socialism and the "Jewish Question" (1924–1984)', *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook*, 30 (1985), 215–42.
- 2 U. Herbert, 'Extermination Policy: New Answers and Questions about the History of the "Holocaust" in German Historiography', in *National Socialist Extermination Policies: Contemporary German Perspectives and Controversies*, ed. U. Herbert (Oxford: Berghahn, 2000), p. 27.
- 3 D.J. Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996).
- 4 O. Heilbrunner, 'From Antisemitic Peripheries to Antisemitic Centres: The Place of Antisemitism in German History', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 35 (2000), 559–76;

- H. Poetzsch, *Anti-Semitismus in der Region. Antisemitische Erscheinungsformen in Sachsen, Hessen, Hessen-Nassau und Braunschweig 1870–1914* (Darmstadt, 2000).
- 5 A. Kauders, *German Politics and the Jews: Düsseldorf and Nuremberg 1910–1933* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).
  - 6 The terms come from M. Stürmer, *Das ruhelose Reich. Deutschland 1866–1918* (Berlin: Severin und Siedler, 1983); J. Radkau, *Das Zeitalter der Nervosität. Deutschland zwischen Bismarck und Hitler* (Munich: Hanser, 1998).
  - 7 H. Hagenlücke, *Deutsche Vaterlandspartei. Die nationale Rechte am Ende des Kaiserreiches* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1997); H.P. Müller, 'Die Deutsche Vaterlandspartei in Württemberg 1917/18 und ihr Erbe. Besorgte Patrioten oder rechte Ideologen?' *Zeitschrift für Württembergische Geschichte*, 59 (2000), 217–24.
  - 8 The best account of this association is still U. Lohalm, *Völkischer Radikalismus. Die Geschichte des Deutschvölkischen Schutz- und Trutzbundes, 1919–1923* (Hamburg: Leibniz-Verlag, 1970); see also M. Greschat, *Protestanten in der Zeit. Kirche und Gesellschaft in Deutschland* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1994), chapter 5; W. Jochmann, 'Die Ausbreitung des Anti-Semitismus', in *Deutsches Judentum im Krieg und Revolution 1916–1923*, ed. W. Mosse (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1971), pp. 409–510; idem, 'Die Ausbreitung des Anti-Semitismus in Deutschland 1914–1923', in *Gesellschaftskrise und Judenfeindschaft in Deutschland 1879–1914* (Hamburg: Christians, 1991), pp. 99–170; G.L. Mosse, 'Die deutsche Rechte und die Juden', in *Entscheidungsjahr 1932. Zur Judenfrage in der Endphase der Weimarer Republik*, ed. W. Mosse (Tübingen: Leo Baeck Institute, 1965).
  - 9 T. van Rahden, *Juden und andere Breslauer. Die Beziehungen zwischen Juden, Protestanten und Katholiken in einer deutschen Frossstadt von 1860 bis 1925* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2000), p. 14.
  - 10 J. Bergmann and K. Megerle, 'Protest und Aufruhr der Landwirtschaft in der Weimarer Republik (1924–1933). Formen und Typen der politischen Agrarbewegung im regionalen Vergleich', in *Regionen im historischen Vergleich. Studien zu Deutschland im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, eds. J. Bergmann and K. Megerle (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1989), pp. 200–67.
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- 37 For the debate around the Goldhagen thesis in the US, see G. Eley, ed., *The Goldhagen Effect* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001); for Germany, see Herbert, ed., *National Socialist Extermination Policies*; for Israel, see *German Anti-Semitism*, ed. Borut and Heilbronner. All the books above and many others argue against Goldhagen and some provide new evidence which reveals the weakness of his thesis. But none touches on Goldhagen's arguments about Nazi and German antisemitism during Weimar.
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