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**Social Outsiders in Nazi Germany** □ □

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## Social Outsiders and the Construction of the Community of the People

*ROBERT GELLATELY AND  
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THE NAZI Party began as a collection of right-wing radicals on the fringes of German society. Once the Great Depression hit Germany, however, the party rapidly became the largest, and certainly the most active, of all those competing for power. Shrewdly tailoring their propaganda and election activities to fit local and regional differences, the Nazis were able to win support from across the social spectrum. At the same time, they took every opportunity to denounce liberal democracy and were particularly vociferous in both their anti-Communism and their antisemitism.<sup>1</sup> To those who joined the party, Nazism was especially attractive because of its promise to create a conflict-free “community of the people.”<sup>2</sup> Soon after Hitler was appointed chancellor on 30 January 1933, he made it clear that he would not retreat from the nationalist and racist elements of his vision of this “community.” Within a week after his appointment, he told leading military men he wanted to remove “the cancer of Democracy” and create the “tightest authoritarian state leadership.” He even ruminated about the “conquest of new living space in the east and its ruthless Germanization.”<sup>3</sup>

At the end of February Hitler was able to take advantage of an arsonist’s attack on the Reichstag building. He immediately obtained an emergency-measure act in the name of stopping an alleged Communist coup and used it effectively to begin the establishment of the Gestapo and concentration camps. Less than a month later, he secured the two-thirds majority in the Reichstag he needed for a constitutional change and an Enabling Law that in effect made it possible for him to become a law-giving dictator.<sup>4</sup>

The major questions facing the new dictatorship were where to begin establishing a racially pure “community of the people” and what to do about Hitler’s call for a “moral purification of the body politic.”<sup>5</sup> Clearly

it was going to take time to get the economy going, to mobilize an army, and to throw off the shackles of the peace treaty of Versailles. In the meantime it was necessary to deal with the economic crisis in the country and with other problems, such as the political opposition. Hitler tended to frame all domestic policies around preparing the nation for war; even the idea of creating the racially pure and internally harmonious “community of the people” was discussed in terms of the next war. He began constructing that community—as well as preparing it for war—by way of a negative-selection process. That process involved eliminating or at least confining certain groups and individuals, especially the Communists and others who were already hated, feared, or envied by many German citizens.<sup>6</sup>

In Germany at the end of the Weimar Republic there were deep worries about Communism, but there was also a pronounced antiliberal tide that rejected the freedoms offered by Weimar and yearned for the restoration of old values. Many citizens worried about crime and what they viewed as the disintegration of society. Under these circumstances, the Nazis saw a winning strategy in their law-and-order platform. Hitler’s personal convictions, Nazi ideology, and what he deemed to be the wishes and hopes of many people came together in deciding where it would be politically most advantageous to begin. The Nazis knew what they shared with many other Germans, and most of their targets were individuals and groups long regarded as outsiders, nuisances, or “problem cases.” The identification, the treatment, and even the pace of their persecution of political opponents and social outsiders illustrated that the Nazis attuned their law-and-order policies to German society, history, and traditions.

The Nazi ideal of a “community of the people” tapped into German traditions that lauded social harmony over conflict and in addition valued hard work, clean living, and law and order. For the Nazis, this idealized community could never see the light of day unless it was based on racial purity.<sup>7</sup> To this end, the new regime set out to mobilize the nation around certain missions, including the elimination of recognizable social types (and stereotypes) who disturbed the peace or who did not conform to well-established German values, but also those who did not fit into the white “Aryan” race.<sup>8</sup> The Nazi version of the struggle between “us” and “them,” between the “community of the people” and the “enemies of the community,” was not just hostile, but vehement and full of language that dripped with war and images drawn from the Darwinian struggle for survival. In the kind of total-war rhetoric the Nazis used,

it followed that mercy and compassion toward all enemies was portrayed as a vice, while intolerance and fanaticism were transformed into virtues.<sup>9</sup>

Once social enemies were targeted, the police, the judges, and any number of civil servants were quick to take the initiative and swing into action, even trying to outdo one another in their fealty to the cause of making the new order. The authorities in state and society “below,” in the cultural realm, medicine, welfare, the penal system, and so on, showed they were pleased that Hitler allowed them the flexibility and freedom to implement measures that many of them had only dared to contemplate in earlier years.

Hitler and to some extent other leaders like Heinrich Himmler did not draw up their far-reaching goals or their tactical plans in a social or historical vacuum. Therefore, to understand what happened to social outsiders we cannot ignore the pre-1933 era. Almost all the contributions in this volume make more than casual reference to pre-Nazi times. As Richard Evans shows in his survey of the preceding three centuries, many of the same kinds of victims of the Third Reich had been pilloried and persecuted for generations. Nazi exclusionary theories built on so-called scientific theories as well as on social traditions and phobias about social outsiders from the pre-Nazi era. What set the Third Reich apart from its predecessors were the radical and murderous practices that issued from the theory and teachings of contempt.

In early 1933 the Communists were the first group attacked. Until then Communism had been growing rapidly in Germany, and after the Depression hit the Communist Party was invariably the third largest in the country. Many citizens were driven into the arms of the Nazis in part because of their flight from and anxieties about this development.<sup>10</sup> The Communists were inimical to the Nazis and to many Germans because of their political behavior, not their social identity or genetic makeup. The Nazis, however, came to view political convictions, especially deeply rooted ones, in social and even in semibiological terms. According to Nazi propaganda, the die-hard Communists in the concentration camps could be recognized by their deformed head shapes and the twisted features of their faces.<sup>11</sup> Beginning the Third Reich with an anti-Communist crusade certainly paid political dividends for the Nazis.

What should happen to the Jews? Hitler downplayed his antisemitism in the very last elections before his appointment so that the Nazi Party could focus on other topics to win more votes.<sup>12</sup> However, by then he and his party were already well known for their stance on the Jews, and

few could doubt that from Hitler's point of view the Jews were enemies to be eliminated one way or another. Whatever else citizens might have thought about the Nazis before 1933, it would be hard to imagine they did not know that Hitler's party was a proponent of the most radical antisemitism.

In 1933 the German Jews were not really "social outsiders." Since gaining their full legal emancipation in 1871, they had become increasingly well integrated. Antisemitism by no means disappeared, but spread during and after the First World War and particularly in the last years of the Weimar Republic. Nazi violence aimed at the Jews was already under way even before Hitler was appointed chancellor.<sup>13</sup> But while German Jews still suffered social discrimination, on the whole they were well represented at the universities, in the arts and sciences, and in the professions. Most were proud of their Fatherland, many had served with distinction in the First World War, and they were often quite nationalistic, much like the Jewish community in Italy.<sup>14</sup> Jews in Germany exhibited all the middle-class values that were generally lauded. As cultured and law-abiding citizens, they embodied the ideals of hard work, long study, and clean living.

At the start of the Third Reich, therefore, Hitler's government soft-peddled its antisemitism, and Hitler carefully steered a course between what he would like to do and what was possible, given public opinion at home and abroad. Instead of an open assault on the Jews, the government opted for less ostentatious steps to begin the reversal of Jewish emancipation. Another consideration was that forcing out the Jews would have disrupted the already crisis-ridden economy. But if the national government proceeded cautiously, Nazi hotheads at the local level used selective violence and intimidation against the Jews. Germans may have been upset by the lawlessness of these persecutions, but in time many yielded to the appeals of antisemitism or at the very least ignored it. As the months passed, pushing the Jews out became easier for many Germans to stomach, especially when they saw that doing so made available Jewish jobs, businesses, and property.

The Jews in Germany were a small minority, but given Nazi definitions of who counted as Jewish, they were potentially one of the largest groups of social outsiders in the country. According to official figures for January 1933, approximately 525,000 Jews lived in Germany.<sup>15</sup> The percentage of these "believing Jews" in the total population, at under 1 percent, was small and had been declining well before Hitler came to power. But vigilant racists, like those in the new German Christian

movement, which strove to unite Christianity and Nazism, worried that the published statistics missed 300,000 or more “Jews” who did not practice their faith and who were not counted as Jews by the statisticians. At the very least, the German Christians wanted to expel them from Protestantism. The Ministry of the Interior’s document from April 1935, to which the German Christians alluded with alarm, also recorded that there were an estimated additional 750,000 “Jewish-Germans” of mixed race in the country.<sup>16</sup> Although Jews of mixed race were not subject to the full scope of Nazi antisemitism, they suffered various kinds of discrimination.<sup>17</sup> Even when some of them applied for and were granted special legal certification to show they were not “Jews” as defined in the laws, their lives remained precarious, not least because decisions about ancestry could always be reversed.<sup>18</sup>

A law of 7 April 1933 made it easy to purge Jews and others from the civil service. Called the Law for the Restoration of a Professional Civil Service to avoid the impression that the Nazis were tampering, this law had enormous implications.<sup>19</sup> It not only applied to the federal civil service, but also reached down to the village level. It pertained to all kinds of officials, judges, the police, university professors, and schoolteachers. The public was told that the law aimed at “the elimination of Jewish and Marxist elements.”<sup>20</sup>

Millions of people were affected by the notorious questionnaires about family background that were part of the law, and follow-up investigations dragged on, guaranteeing lots of snooping. Informers rushed in to settle old scores or to gain some personal advantage from the process.<sup>21</sup> Above and beyond the considerable direct effects these proceedings had on Jews and/or on people with some association with “Marxism,” the process undoubtedly made the entire civil service aware of the new rules of the game, and in case anyone did not yet know, it was guaranteed to spread the word that official antisemitism was now government policy.

Nazi hotheads out in the provinces were impatient with these legalistic measures, but such antisemitic violence as developed generally did not look like the pillage and plunder, for example, seen recently in the Balkans. Instead the Nazis tempered their persecutions to accommodate public opinion that did not wish to see street violence or property destruction.

Historians continue to debate how Germans responded to what happened. However, most would now agree that although citizens generally did not want violence, by the end of the prewar era many came to

accept the Nazi point of view, that there was a “Jewish question.”<sup>22</sup> By then the Jews had been turned into social outsiders, and most non-Jews in Germany came to the self-righteous conclusion that it would be better for all concerned if the Jews, driven to the margins of society, would leave the country. Underground Socialist observers, highly critical of Hitler’s dictatorship, noted that while some people sympathized with the persecuted Jews, others took the view that “these Jews must have been up to something,” for otherwise “the state would not have pounced.”<sup>23</sup> According to one detailed study, even before the war, “there is conclusive evidence that on the whole the population consented to attacks on the Jews as long as these neither damaged non-Jews nor harmed the interests of the country, particularly its reputation abroad.”<sup>24</sup>

Frank Bajohr investigates in this volume what was euphemistically called “Aryanization,” that is, taking over Jewish businesses and property. The gradual impoverishment of the Jews made it difficult for them to emigrate, and it became a struggle for many who remained in the country to maintain themselves. Bajohr shows elsewhere how, in Hamburg, the public auction of goods that had been stolen from the local Jews or from Jews in eastern Europe became almost a daily occurrence from early 1941 until the end of the war. These auctions turned citizens into accomplices who profited directly from the persecution and murder of the Jews.<sup>25</sup>

Marion Kaplan investigates how the Jews reacted when the country and people they loved turned on and rejected them. Although in the post-Holocaust world one may wonder why the Jews did not leave Germany in greater numbers, in fact the regime’s intentions were not immediately clear. At least until 1938, persecution was halting and sporadic, and in many parts of the country, even in Berlin, as Peter Gay has testified, Jews could live a relatively “normal” existence.<sup>26</sup> What struck most Jews, according to Kaplan, were these ambiguities, the mixed messages, and not least their own ambivalent feelings about leaving. Looking back, however, the survivors testify to how quickly they began to feel like outsiders.

The situation of the Jews who stayed, often because they had nowhere to go, deteriorated with the pogrom in November 1938 and grew worse after the coming of the war in 1939. The desolate status of the Jews, who were the subject of endless hate-filled speeches from the country’s leaders and the recipients of shabby treatment by most of their neighbors, was formally symbolized when they were forced to wear the

yellow star (from 15 September 1941). The deportations soon began, and as if to cut Jews off from all contact with other citizens, shortly thereafter (24 October 1941) it became a serious crime for any “German-blooded person” to be seen in public with a Jew.

We have to be aware, of course, that there was no such thing as a “German-blooded person,” and that the Nazis used this kind of language, along with an arsenal of laws and other measures, to turn Jewish citizens into social outsiders.<sup>27</sup> It is precisely because of what the Nazis did to language that historians are driven to use quotation marks around so many words, whose meanings were utterly twisted out of shape and at times turned on their head. Victor Klemperer, whose recently published diaries have become famous, partly because of his philological observations, was the first (in 1947) to publish a study of Nazis’ corruption of the German language.<sup>28</sup>

As part of their political and racial mission, Hitler and the Nazis set out to restore what they termed the “wholesomeness” to Germany’s cultural life, and to remove the “poison.” Alan Steinweis indicates some of the ways the Nazis led a kind of cultural revolution of their own, one that was bound up with and reinforced by the policies of persecution and marginalization that targeted the groups studied in this volume. Jews suffered disproportionately as the Third Reich’s culture victims, for they could be driven out on the basis of racist teachings and also on the grounds that all cultural fields and artistic endeavors were by definition reserved for non-Jewish Germans only. The purges of the Jews from the civil service inspired follow-up dismissals from the arts and the press, and even from the free professions. Such steps were necessary—according to press reports—to placate the “outrage of the entire German-blooded population” at Jewish professionals.<sup>29</sup> Steinweis maintains that the “vast majority” of non-Jewish artists who were allowed to continue their work found little difficulty in adjusting to Nazi practices, including censorship.

One of the groups who suffered both state-sponsored discrimination and enormous social pressure were the couples who lived in what the Nazis called “mixed marriages,” that is, those involving Jewish and non-Jewish partners. Whereas in earlier times “mixed marriages” loosely referred to a marriage between people of different religions, now the Nazis transformed the term and applied it to their definition of different “races.” Nathan Stoltzfus traces the history of those living in such unions. He shows that many “Aryan” Germans remained loyal to their spouses, even though the regime did everything possible to break the



ties. The non-Jewish spouses in these marriages had social-outsider status thrust upon them at every turn. They were despised by the regime and also by many people who knew them. As they were continually reminded, all they had to do to avoid further difficulty and to be welcomed back into the fold was to divorce their Jewish spouse, a process that the authorities tried to bring about. Many who lived in these “mixed marriages” refused to go along and, as Stoltzfus shows, rescued their spouses from deportation to a concentration camp.

Victor Klemperer’s diaries provide testimony from the inside of such a “mixed marriage.” Stoltzfus indicates that in contrast to most citizens, intermarried Germans refused to yield to the advancement of Nazi anti-Jewish policies with regard to their family members. For its part, the Nazi regime was surprisingly timid when it came to dissolving these marriages even into the war years, and was also slow to encroach on the sanctity of private property, because these moves might have made many Germans uncomfortable.<sup>30</sup>

Even as they perpetrated the Holocaust and other unspeakable crimes all over Europe, the Nazis fussed and worried about marriage certificates and property deeds. The regime also steered a careful course when it came to excluding and destroying Germans who suffered from various hereditary diseases and infirmities. As Henry Friedlander shows, older German and European theories about heredity, race, “degeneration,” and criminality merged to form a racist ideology that was taken up, advanced, and translated into murderous practices by the Nazis. Until 1933 sterilization had been illegal, much to the frustration of race and medical experts, some of whom had been arguing for it from as early as the turn of the century. In the Third Reich, those in many branches of medicine and “racial hygiene” were pleased that the dictatorship finally untied their hands to deal with people whose “defects”—whether mental, physical, or merely ones of appearance—were thought (often on dubious grounds) to be hereditary.<sup>31</sup> The participation of race scientists, medical specialists, and learned judges in the massive sterilization campaign helped to assure good citizens that proper procedures were being followed. Far from being appalled at the sterilization program the Nazis brought in, medical officials greeted it.<sup>32</sup> The Nazis expended an enormous amount of time and energy to “sell” this program to the German people,<sup>33</sup> and they won at least their “tacit support.”<sup>34</sup> However, because the Nazis ran up against deep-seated religious convictions when it came to what they called “euthanasia,” they were more secretive and circumspect in pushing it.<sup>35</sup>

We know from other sources that Nazi medical officials who toured some parts of the country wanted to sterilize whole villages when the people (all “ordinary Germans”) did not appear well-kept or tidy enough.<sup>36</sup> At the very least sterilization, forced and otherwise, would mean that the people who had “infirmities” and other problems would not be able to pass them on. In the event, an estimated 400,000 people were sterilized in Germany.<sup>37</sup>

The exclusionary policies that aimed to cleanse the Fatherland of chronic-care cases and the mentally ill became more radical with the coming of the war. Hitler backdated to 1 September 1939 his authorization (not order) for doctors to begin the “mercy killing” operation, as if to symbolize that war made it possible at last to put aside mere civilian considerations in the creation of the “community of the people.” When the public got wind of what was happening there was some unrest, but no open protest. Some, but not all, local residents near the killing sites were appalled. One woman wrote to the hospital where her two siblings reportedly died within a few days of each other. She said she accepted the Third Reich, and hoped to “find peace again” if doctors could assure her that her siblings had been killed by virtue of some law that made it possible to “relieve people from their chronic suffering.”<sup>38</sup>

People who had been tried by the courts and sent to prison as criminals were regarded as social outsiders in Germany and most other countries long before the Third Reich, and dealing with them more radically than ever seemed almost inevitable for a “law-and-order” dictatorship like Hitler’s. Thus in mid-1933, at about the same time that the Nazis promulgated the first important measures against the Jews and introduced what would become their massive sterilization program, they also proceeded against criminals. As Nikolaus Wachsmann makes clear, during the Weimar Republic criminologists, prison officials, and the police had all called for the kinds of steps the Nazis were soon to permit. For example, in Weimar the authorities sought the preventive arrest of repeat offenders, but those demands did not get very far until after Hitler’s appointment. From the Nazi point of view, arresting people before they committed new crimes not only fitted the new approach to “law and order” but was consistent with popular demands for an end to what was widely perceived in 1933 to be a crime wave. Wachsmann shows what happened, and especially how the war led to a radicalization in the persecution of certain criminals.

Nazi theory and practice toward convicted criminals reflected what happened to the “asocials,” a loosely defined group that was much

discussed in welfare and police circles well before the Nazi era. We do not have a specific contribution focusing on people who were labeled asocials by the Nazis, but this vaguely and quite arbitrarily defined group is studied at some length in several of the essays. The concept was used to describe anyone who did not act according to what the Nazis defined as a “good citizen,” and who avoided what were held to be one’s proper social responsibilities. Asocials were usually described in emotional terms as the “dregs of society,” with weak characters, loose morals, and poor work habits. The Nazis took many steps to deal with them, and carried out some curious experiments in social engineering, like one attempt in the mid-1930s to establish a “family colony” of asocials near Bremen, ostensibly to see if they could be resocialized. Pictures of the camp make it look like a modern suburb, but it did not last, mainly because the Nazis ultimately concluded that “asociality,” like most social ills, was hereditary.<sup>39</sup>

The Nazis wanted to rid society of all people whose way of life did not conform to the new ideals. They moved quickly against anyone who would not take up a regular job, and even in mid-1933 various authorities went after beggars and others, like the Gypsies, the “work-shy,” and the homeless for (what a local ordinance called) “bothering the population.”<sup>40</sup> By mid-September 1933 the police ordered a nationwide end to the “plague of the beggars” in the streets. Citizens were asked to cooperate by reserving their funds for proper charities, and were reminded that Germany was too poor to afford “full-time beggars, work-shy, drinkers, and fraud artists.”<sup>41</sup>

Annette Timm focuses on the prostitutes, yet another asocial group toward whom the Nazis adopted an ambivalent stance. Certainly prostitutes offended traditional morality, lived outside the law, avoided regular work, were an affront to family values, and perhaps worst of all, spread fertility-threatening venereal disease. Women even vaguely suspected of being prostitutes were sent to variously defined “work camps,” and for a time mere failure to pay health insurance premiums could be used as a pretext to send “loose women” to a camp. Any woman treated by a doctor for a sexually transmitted disease also risked being classed by a health or welfare official as a “work-shy welfare recipient” and sent to a camp.<sup>42</sup> However, Nazi attitudes toward prostitution changed over time, and as the war approached, the regime that had presented itself as a moral and health crusader began to tolerate officially registered prostitutes in what became state-run brothels. It is difficult to quantify prostitution over the centuries, as much of it was part time or occasional, but

the Third Reich may well have fostered more prostitution in state-sanctioned brothels than any comparable period in German history.

The war marked a dramatic and a deadly turn in the persecution of the Roma and Sinti, usually referred to as the “Gypsies.” As Sybil Milton shows, social prejudice and state hostility toward these people had a long history in Germany and the rest of Europe, reaching back well before the Third Reich. German society was not alone among European nations in regarding the Roma and Sinti as problem cases who could not, or would not, fit in. In the modern era of state- and nation-making, such people were often seen as a group apart, and in addition they were considered to be prone to crime, socially inferior, and utterly outside “normal” society. In Germany the Roma and Sinti constituted a very small minority, but under Hitler’s dictatorship they caught the official eye. The Third Reich offered local officials and citizens the prospect of dealing with “their Gypsies” more fundamentally than ever, and there were plenty of suggestions for actions from “below.” Milton points to parallels in the definition, registration, confinement, and deportation of the Jews and the Roma and Sinti. Michael Zimmermann recently and quite rightly has insisted that “racially motivated genocide formed the essence of National Socialist Gypsy policy, when compared to the earlier German variety.”<sup>43</sup> Milton reminds us of the fate of these people and how greatly they suffered.

Social prejudices against homosexuality in Germany were also very old, and they found their way into the German criminal code in 1871. Neither the law nor the social prejudices entirely disappeared over the years. Under the liberal Weimar Republic, there was the widespread perception that homosexuality was on the increase. Geoffrey Giles suggests that Hitler may not have been as obsessed by homophobia as is often supposed, but nevertheless when he addressed the topic he sounded murderous enough, and at the very least the kind of leader who would support any of his followers who wanted to wipe out homosexuality. As it happened, Himmler was as keen to deal with homosexuals as he was determined to solve many other “problem cases.” He wanted them not just out of the SS and the police, but stamped out of German society.

The identification and persecution of gay men was very much on the police agenda in the new Reich. The Nazis sharpened the laws and centralized enforcement. Both the Gestapo and the criminal police (Kripo) had special sections to track down and prosecute gay men. Like many of the policies and practices aimed at other social outsiders, the persecution of gay men was noticeably radicalized during the war. Although lesbian-

ism also offended what the Nazis called “wholesome popular sentiment,” it evoked no systematic campaign, partly because it was not regarded as a serious “danger to the nation’s survival.”<sup>44</sup>

The war brought home a stunning new fact of life for everyone in the country: Germany could not cope with the war without using hundreds of thousands, and then millions, of foreign laborers. In the autumn of 1939 Polish prisoners of war and then civilian Poles became the first to arrive. These were the new social outsiders, and Robert Gellately discusses them in his essay. The Poles are studied as a “representative” example of the millions of others who came from eastern and western Europe, many of them against their will.

Anti-Polish attitudes and traditions in Germany were and still are legendary, going back for generations. A study of the citizenship law of 1913 (until quite recently, still in force) shows that it was drawn up in such a way as to keep German citizenship from the Poles and the Jews coming into the country from the East. The law restricted citizenship to lineage and blood, and would not confer it when a person simply lived in Germany, even for a long time. The law made it possible to keep citizenship away from at least any newly arriving Poles and Jews, and they could be permanently excluded.<sup>45</sup>

The anti-Polish sentiments that were part and parcel of German tradition were magnified many times in the Third Reich, so that it was a bitter pill for the Nazis to have to import these foreigners they despised so much into their midst. At the very moment the Nazis were taking unprecedented steps to form a racially pure community by killing “defectives” and deporting the Jews, they were creating a dilemma for themselves insofar as they began to import “racially foreign people.” To limit the damage, the Nazis established an apartheid system inside Germany. Poles were forced to wear a badge with a “P” on their clothing and were told that any sexual relations with Germans was a capital offense. Indeed, the offending foreign workers were initially hanged in the street. Many Germans were not as hostile toward the Poles as the authorities wished. Farmers were happy to have help on their farms, and many ordinary people were pleased to have cheap hired hands, including young women, to help out around the house.<sup>46</sup>

Doris Bergen focuses on “ethnic Germans,” another group of new outsiders in wartime Germany. They were gathered up from various regions across eastern Europe, but some thrust themselves forward with tenuous proof of their German origins. In one sense these people were insiders, or at least had this potential from the Nazi point of view, and they certainly wanted to be counted in the “master race.” Supposedly

their ethnicity (or blood) made them “Aryans.” However, as Bergen shows, the pseudoscientific and arbitrary nature of the “theories” on which Nazi racism and ethnic cleansing rested became clear when the experts tried to examine such borderline cases. The ethnic Germans, often having lived for generations outside Germany, had their own backgrounds and strange accents and customs that caused them to stand out in the eyes of ordinary Germans and officialdom and made them seem barely distinguishable from their east European neighbors. Nazi race “science” revealed itself as quackery, but often very deadly quackery.

During the conference on which this book is based, we all became aware that there were other groups we would like to have included in this book. We especially regret not having a study of the Jehovah’s Witnesses, religious outsiders who in the end resisted Nazi pressure to conform. Many of them paid with their lives in concentration camps.<sup>47</sup>

The examination of social outsiders also raises many theoretical issues. During the conference some of us decided to work on another follow-up volume to address those issues and to deal with the comparative study of social outsiders in other times and places. It is also true that the persecution of social outsiders inside Nazi Germany led into theories and practices of genocide in eastern Europe. A theoretical framework for the comparative study of social outsiders in twentieth-century Europe and their links to genocide can be seen in Omer Bartov’s provocative essay. He explores the wider implications of the Nazis’ apocalyptic vision of the idyllic and harmonious future that was to be attained by selectively forgetting the past and proposing all kinds of “final solutions” to social and political questions. Bartov’s analysis brings us back to the centrality of antisemitism in the Third Reich as he focuses mainly on the Jews and the Holocaust. What he has to say more generally also elucidates the context in which a series of social outsiders were singled out, stigmatized, and slated for elimination. As he puts it, modern war and totalitarianism “necessitate and devise final solutions in which humanity is perceived as a mass of matter to be molded, controlled, moved, purged, and annihilated. This conceptualization of the world biologizes society and sociologizes biology; humanity becomes an organism in need of radical surgery, or a social construct in need of sociological reordering. Hence the vast population transfers, brutal operations of ethnic cleansing, eradication of whole social classes, and ultimately outright genocide, the most final solution of all.”

This book began as a conference on social outsiders in Nazi Germany, organized by Robert Gellately and Nathan Stoltzfus, supported by the

Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, and held in Madrid in December 1998. Most of the essays presented here began as papers for that conference. Some were extensively revised, and we have added a number of others to round out the picture.<sup>48</sup> We would like to thank the Guggenheim Foundation and, for their useful suggestions to improve this volume, also the two anonymous readers of the manuscript for Princeton University Press, as well as Kevin Mason for technical assistance in manuscript preparation. It is our hope that through this work we can stimulate discussion and debate about the social and political construction of social outsiders and their fate inside Nazi Germany.

## NOTES

1. See Michael H. Kater, *The Nazi Party: A Social Profile of Members and Leaders, 1919–1945* (Cambridge, Mass., 1983); and Thomas Childers, *The Nazi Voter: The Social Foundation of Fascism in Germany, 1919–1933* (Chapel Hill, 1983).

2. A classic account is Theodore Abel, *Why Hitler Came to Power* (1938; Cambridge, Mass., 1986).

3. For General Liebmann's notes of the meeting, see Jeremy Noakes and Geoffrey Pridham, eds., *Nazism, 1919–1945: A Documentary Reader* (Exeter, 1988), 3:628–29.

4. This and other relevant documents can be found in *ibid.*, 1:142.

5. See Max Domarus, ed., *Hitler Reden und Proklamationen, 1932–1945* (Leonberg, 1973), 1:229–37, here 232–33.

6. See Martin Broszat, *Der Staat Hitlers*, 2 ed. (Munich, 1971), 434.

7. For an excellent introduction, see Jeremy Noakes, "Social Outcasts in the Third Reich," in *Life in the Third Reich*, ed. Richard Bessel (New York, 1987), 83–96.

8. For an interesting overview, see Uli Linke, *German Bodies: Race and Representation after Hitler* (New York, 1999), esp. 37–54.

9. For a convenient collection of the relevant documents, see Wolfgang Ayaß, ed., "Gemeinschaftsfremde": *Quellen zur Verfolgung von "Asozialen," 1933–1945* (Koblenz, 1998), 366–82.

10. For the statistics, critique of the literature, and latest analysis, see Jürgen W. Falter, *Hitlers Wähler* (Munich, 1991).

11. See the book by Camp Commandant Werner Schäfer of Oranienburg, *Konzentrationslager Oranienburg: Das Anti-Braunbuch über das erste deutsche Konzentrationslager* (Berlin, 1934), 25, 31.

12. For an interesting analysis, see Anthony Kauders, *German Politics and the Jews: Düsseldorf and Nuremberg, 1919–1933* (Oxford, 1996), here 183.

13. For a convincing recent account of antisemitism and violence aimed at the Jews, see Dirk Walter, *Antisemitische Kriminalität und Gewalt: Judenfeindschaft in der Weimarer Republik* (Bonn, 1999).
14. See the remarkable study by Alexander Stille, *Benevolence and Betrayal: Five Italian Jewish Families under Fascism* (New York, 1991), esp. 17–90.
15. See, for example, Ino Arndt and Heinz Boberach, “Deutsches Reich,” in *Dimension des Völkermords: Die Zahl der jüdischen Opfer des Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Wolfgang Benz (Munich, 1996), 23.
16. See Doris L. Bergen, *Twisted Cross: The German Christian Movement in the Third Reich* (Chapel Hill, 1996), 83–84.
17. See Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and Jews*, vol 1: *The Years of Persecution, 1933–1939* (New York, 1997), here 157.
18. For a detailed recent analysis, see Beate Meyer, *‘Jüdische Mischlinge’: Rassenpolitik und Verfolgungserfahrung, 1933–1945* (Hamburg, 1999), 162–259.
19. For a copy of the law and others applying to the civil service, see Ingo von Münch, ed., *Gesetze des NS-Staates*, 3 ed. (Paderborn, 1994), 26–28.
20. “Nur deutschblütige Beamte dürfen die Staatsautorität verkörpern,” in *Völkischer Beobachter* (4 April 1933); “Säuberung des Beamtentums,” in *Völkischer Beobachter* (13 April 1933).
21. Jane Caplan, *Government without Administration: State and Civil Society in Weimar and Nazi Germany* (Oxford, 1988), 143–46. For a local examination, see Karl Teppe, *Provinz, Partei, Staat* (Münster, 1977), 36–68.
22. See Ian Kershaw, *Popular Opinion and Political Dissent in the Third Reich: Bavaria, 1933–1945* (Oxford, 1983), 224–77.
23. See the July report of *Deutschland-Berichte der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands (Sopade)* (Frankfurt am Main, 1980), here (1938), 763.
24. David Bankier, *The Germans and the Final Solution: Public Opinion under Nazism* (Oxford, 1992), 73–74.
25. Frank Bajohr, “Arisierung” in *Hamburg: Die Verdrängung der jüdischen Unternehmer, 1933–1945* (Hamburg, 1997), 331–38.
26. Peter Gay, *My German Question: Growing Up in Nazi Berlin* (New Haven, 1998), 57–83.
27. These laws and others are discussed in Robert Gellately, *The Gestapo and German Society: Enforcing Racial Policy, 1933–1945* (Oxford, 1990).
28. His classic study is now available in English as Victor Klemperer, *The Language of the Third Reich*, trans. M. Brady (New York, 1999). See also the remarkable account by George Steiner, *Language and Silence: Essays, 1958–1966* (Harmondsworth, 1969).
29. The phrases are from government officials as cited in Horst Göppinger, *Juristen jüdischer Abstammung im “Dritten Reich,”* 2 ed. (Munich, 1990), 59; see also “Aufbruch zum Recht,” in *Völkischer Beobachter* (6 April 1933).
30. For the testimony of a Jewish survivor of a “mixed marriage” who



refused to sign over the property of her “Aryan” husband after his death and her immediate deportation, see Donald L. Niewyk, ed., *Fresh Wounds: Early Narratives of Holocaust Survival* (Chapel Hill, 1998), 268–72, here 271.

31. See Robert N. Proctor, *Racial Hygiene: Medicine under the Nazis* (Cambridge, Mass., 1988), 95–117.

32. For more on this theme, see Götz Aly, Peter Chroust, and Christian Pross, *Cleansing the Fatherland: Nazi Medicine and Racial Hygiene*, trans. B. Cooper (Baltimore, 1994).

33. See Christine Charlotte Makowski, *Eugenic, Sterilisationspolitik, “Euthanasie” und Bevölkerungspolitik in der nationalsozialistischen Parteipresse* (Husem, 1996).

34. See Noakes, “Social Outcasts,” 86.

35. For a study of the propaganda films used to “sell” euthanasia, see Michael Burleigh, *Death and Deliverance: “Euthanasia” in Germany, 1900–1945* (Cambridge, 1994), 183–219.

36. For local details, see Paul Sauer, *Württemberg in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus* (Ulm, 1975), 146–54.

37. See Gisela Bock, *Zwangsterilisation im Nationalsozialismus: Studien zur Rassenpolitik und Frauenpolitik* (Opladen, 1986), 238.

38. Correspondence is reprinted in *Der Prozess gegen die Hauptkriegsverbrecher vor dem Internationalen Militärgerichtshof, Nürnberg*, vol. 35 (Nuremberg, 1949), here 689.

39. See Lisa Pine, *Nazi Family Policy, 1933–1945* (Oxford, 1997), 117–46.

40. The phrase is from a Bremen law of 11 August 1933, reprinted Ayaß, ed., “*Gemeinschaftsfremde*,” 33. See also the excellent study of Wolfgang Ayaß, “*Asoziale*” in *Nationalsozialismus* (Stuttgart, 1995). By “Gypsies” we mean the two distinct groups of Roma and Sinti, many of whom do not accept the collective term “Gypsies” that was used pejoratively over many years to stereotype them negatively. Instead, throughout the book we try to use Roma and Sinti, the terms they prefer. For additional information see chapter 10.

41. The *Völkischer Beobachter* (Munich) printed the call of the Bavarian government (18 September 1933); see Ayaß, ed., “*Gemeinschaftsfremde*,” 42–43.

42. See Wolfgang Ayaß, *Das Arbeitshaus Breitenau* (Kassel, 1992), 282–83.

43. Michael Zimmermann, “Die nationalsozialistische ‘Lösung der Zigeunerfrage,’” in Ulrich Herbert, ed., *Nationalsozialistische Vernichtungspolitik, 1939–1945: Neue Forschungen und Kontroversen* (Frankfurt am Main, 1998), 225–62, here 261.

44. See the 1937 speech of Dr. Josef Meisinger in J. Noakes, *Nazism, 1919–1945*, vol. 4: *The German Home Front in World War II* (Exeter, 1998), 391. For an analysis, see Claudia Schoppmann, “National Socialist Policies towards Female Homosexuality,” in Lynn Abrams and Elizabeth Harvey, eds., *Gender Relations in German History* (Durham, 1997), 177–87.

45. See Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge, Mass., 1992), 114–37.

46. For a recent oral history, see Annetreien Mendel, *Zwangsarbeit im Kinderzimmer: "Ostarbeiterinnen" in deutschen Familien von 1939 bis 1945. Gespräche mit Polinnen und Deutschen* (Frankfurt, 1994).

47. For a major study, see Detlev Garbe, *Zwischen Widerstand und Martyrium: Die Zeugen Jehovas im "Dritten Reich"* (Munich, 1994). He shows that this religious community counted between 25,000 and 30,000 members in Germany at the start of the Third Reich. Eventually many were sent to camps, where they were mistreated and sometimes shot out of hand when they would not renounce their faith, show loyalty to Nazism such as by giving the Hitler greeting, or serve in the armed forces after the draft was reintroduced in 1935.

48. For studies that deal with a wide range of social outsiders and provide extensive additional reading, see Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wippermann, *The Racial State: Germany, 1933–1945* (Cambridge, 1991); Michael Berenbaum and Abraham J. Peck, eds., *The Holocaust and History: The Known, the Unknown, the Disputed, and the Reexamined* (Bloomington, 1998).