

## Introduction

Devin O. Pendas, Mark Roseman, and Richard F. Wetzell

As Eve Rosenhaft noted recently, over the past two decades the term “racial state” has become a “shorthand” explanation for understanding the Third Reich – a shorthand that presumes that the Nazis pursued a coherent and purposeful racial policy and that a widely disseminated and shared knowledge about race gave the different strands of their societal policy impetus and cohesion.<sup>1</sup> It is this shorthand, and concerns that the concept of the “racial state” is beginning to prove more of an obstacle than an aid to understanding Nazi Germany, that provided the impetus for the present collection, which explores racial ideology, racial policy, and Nazi rule.

### BURLEIGH AND WIPPERMANN’S *THE RACIAL STATE*

While the label “racial state” is as old as the Nazi regime itself,<sup>2</sup> its present prominence is almost entirely due to Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wippermann’s lucid and widely read 1991 synthesis, *The Racial State*, which helped to crystallize a new orthodoxy about the scope and character of Nazi policy.<sup>3</sup> Drawing on a wealth of new research that had been conducted in the 1980s, not least some remarkable and passionate scholarship conducted outside the universities, Burleigh and Wippermann argued that the Nazis had pursued a coherent racial policy. Their book advanced three main arguments. First, they situated the familiar story of anti-Jewish persecution in the larger context of an “all-pervasive racism of the Nazi state” that targeted all manner of German citizens and subjects.<sup>4</sup> Though now common knowledge, until the 1980s the degree to which the Nazis had targeted the mentally and physically handicapped, for example,

had been shamefully neglected in research. Alongside the persecution and murder of the Jews, *The Racial State* captured in its spotlight the persecution and murder of Roma and Sinti, the sterilization of the “hereditarily ill” and of racially defined groups such as the offspring of French African troops and German mothers, and the “euthanasia” murder of the mentally and physically handicapped as well as the Nazi persecution of “asocials” and homosexuals. While there were “different specificities,” all of these groups, Burleigh and Wippermann argued, “were persecuted for the same reasons.”<sup>5</sup> The “Final Solution” to the Jewish question was thus presented as just one, albeit the most pressing, of a set of “answers” to an overarching question, namely, how to cleanse society of undesirable elements and create a racial utopia.

Second, Burleigh and Wippermann insisted that Nazi racial and social policy must be seen as “two sides of the same coin,”<sup>6</sup> because a racial utopia required not just the removal of undesirables but also the grooming and monitoring of the rest of the population. Just as striking as the range of victims Burleigh and Wippermann uncovered was their argument that the social policies directed at the mainstream population also had a significant racial component. Offering chapters on youth, women, and men, the authors showed, for example, the degree to which allocating state resources became tied to genealogical pedigree and racial quality. The Nazis, they maintained, sought to create a new racial hierarchy that would replace the class structure of German society. Through financial inducements and criminal sanctions, racially favored groups were induced to reproduce. The regime’s social policies “struck at people whether they were rich or poor, bourgeois, peasants or workers”<sup>7</sup> – and indeed whether they were male or female, though women were particularly affected by state-organized racial reproduction policies. The whole population was thus affected by the reorganization of society along racial lines.

None of this would have been possible, the authors contended in their third major argument, without the remarkable and chilling involvement of elites and intellectuals, be it in state service, in the professions, or in a variety of research institutes and agencies. “Racial anthropologists, biologists and hygienicists, economists, geographers, historians and sociologists,” they argued, “created the conceptual framework and the scientific legitimisation” for the regime’s racial policy.<sup>8</sup> Many academic disciplines and professional groups experienced boom conditions under Nazi rule. Few areas of Nazi policy emerged without the active involvement of academics in providing content, momentum, and intellectual legitimacy.<sup>9</sup>

In Burleigh and Wippermann's hands, therefore, the older view of Nazi racism and anti-Semitism as the private fantasy of a narrow coterie of deranged cranks thus gave way to that of a comprehensive societal project aided and abetted by Germany's best and brightest.

#### THE HISTORIOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

Burleigh and Wippermann's study was less an original statement than a synthesis that captured and contributed to a burgeoning consensus. But their book also had a polemical edge, in that the two authors saw one of their central tasks as refuting recent arguments about the modernity of the Third Reich.<sup>10</sup> On the one hand, they wanted to rebut a series of influential studies of the social history of the Third Reich, published in the 1960s and 1970s, by David Schoenbaum, Ralf Dahrendorf, and Tim Mason, who claimed that the Nazi regime's social policies had had a significant modernizing effect on German society, which Schoenbaum labeled "Hitler's social revolution."<sup>11</sup> Burleigh and Wippermann explicitly countered this interpretation because they saw it as ignoring the racial character of Nazi policies.

On the other hand, they argued that recent work that was more cognizant of the racial elements of Nazi policy had inappropriately labeled those elements as modern. In the chapter of his 1982 book *Volksgenossen und Gemeinschaftsfremde* entitled "Racism as Social Policy," Detlev Peukert had anticipated significant elements of *The Racial State* by arguing that the Nazi regime's

racism offered a model for a new order of society ... It rested on the racially legitimated removal of all elements that deviated from the norm, refractory youth, idlers, the asocial, prostitutes, homosexuals, people who were incompetent or failures at work, the disabled. National Socialist eugenics ... laid down criteria of assessment ... that were applicable to the population as a whole.

But he also advanced the thesis that National Socialism must not be seen as "an inexplicable, sudden appearance of 'medieval barbarism' in a progressive society" but on the contrary "demonstrated, with heightened clarity and murderous consistency, the pathologies and seismic fractures of the modern civilizing process."<sup>12</sup> Similarly, in 1985, a group of young historians, including Götz Aly and Karl Heinz Roth, began publishing the series *Beiträge zur nationalsozialistischen Gesundheits- und Sozialpolitik*, which presented pioneering research on the Nazi euthanasia program, eugenics, and racial and social policy, and focused on neglected victim

groups, including the mentally ill, Roma and Sinti, asocials, and forced laborers.<sup>13</sup> Like Peukert, these authors saw Nazi social and racial policies as different sides of the same coin, but they went further than Peukert in three respects:<sup>14</sup> by arguing that the Nazi “concept of rule . . . combined German population policy, economic policy, and social policy in order to attain the goal of a ‘final solution of the social question’”; by positing a close connection between “extermination and modernization”;<sup>15</sup> and by drawing attention to the “scientifically and economically rational” elements in National Socialism.<sup>16</sup>

Even though Burleigh and Wippermann agreed with these authors that Nazi racial and social policy were inextricably connected (and drew on the pioneering research published in the *Beiträge*), they vigorously disputed that Nazi racial policy was part of modernization. The fact that Peukert and the editors of the *Beiträge* had departed from classic modernization theory and earlier social historians of the Third Reich such as Schoenbaum and Dahrendorf by decoupling modernization from any notion of progress in order to call attention to modernization’s dark side did not seem to matter to Burleigh and Wippermann, for their objection was essentially a moral one: in their view, interpreting National Socialism as a phenomenon of modernity or modernization was tantamount to relativizing its crimes. “Older titles like *Hitler’s Social Revolution* are joined by *Modernity and the Holocaust*,” they wrote, “as the unique horrors of the Third Reich disappear within the fog of relativizing sociological rhetoric. The fact of Nazi Germany’s murder of millions of Jews, Sinti and Roma and others at a specific point in time is obscured by talk of general genocidal impulses allegedly latent beneath the thin civilized crust of all ‘modern’ societies.”<sup>17</sup> Instead, Burleigh and Wippermann insisted that the Nazi regime was “novel and *sui generis*,” “a singular regime without precedent or parallel.”<sup>18</sup>

To be sure, “modernity” as such has generally proved an unhelpful category of analysis for historians of the Nazi era, not least because there is little consensus on what it stands for and because there are massive variations within the modern epoch between different temporal phases and societies.<sup>19</sup> But by limiting legitimate use of the term “modernity” to contexts where it connoted betterment, improvement, or progress, *The Racial State* had no concept left with which to describe shared characteristics of the industrialized world that are not benevolent.<sup>20</sup> Just as importantly, having rejected any association of National Socialism with modernity, Burleigh and Wippermann had to disconnect Nazism from modern science. This was not an easy case for the authors, given that they

## Introduction

5

were so conscious of the contributions to Nazi policy made by Germany's intellectual elites; indeed, they showed that there "were few areas of Nazi racial policy which did not involve academics in its formulation and legitimization, and that many of the latter were culpably involved in its implementation."<sup>21</sup> To be sure, they acknowledged that many scientists involved were convinced of their objectivity and believed their work was essential for national progress. But although they argued that science had lent Nazism its specifically academic and scientific character, Burleigh and Wippermann characterized science under the Nazi regime as a "corrupt" and "inherently distorted" science.<sup>22</sup> *The Racial State* paid particular attention to the loss of moral judgments and also to such factors as professional animosities, careerism, and the myopic vision of the individual institution. Even though these tendencies were surely present, it is hard to see them as somehow extraneous to the normal functioning of modern science. As a result, most subsequent research has not accepted Burleigh and Wippermann's account of science under the Nazi regime as deviant science.

This collection of essays was not prompted by a desire to revisit the idiosyncratic elements of Burleigh and Wippermann's *The Racial State*. Instead, we seek to question the consensus over the power and coherence of Nazi racial ideology that established itself in the book's wake in order to tackle many of the kinds of questions about science, rationality, and more generic features of the modern world that exercised the earlier volume from a different angle.

While we may balk at Burleigh and Wippermann's emphatic claim that Nazi racial policy was *sui generis*, many of the contributions to this volume are informed by a central tension in thinking about Nazi Germany, namely the conflict between locating the regime in the wider world and maintaining a sense of the Third Reich's distinctiveness. On the one hand, we are mindful of a certain longstanding myopia in studies of Nazi Germany. Remember, for example, Jacob Robinson, who in his 1944 foreword to Jacoby's *Racial State* had confidently claimed that the Nazis were the first who "introduced the racial point of view in modern government" – a breathtaking claim given the formal and informal rules long operating in Europe's overseas empires and indeed in the United States.<sup>23</sup> Within scholarship on Nazi Germany, it was long forgotten that racial violence had been a commonplace under European rule and that racially based legal distinctions and administrative conventions were also profoundly constitutive of the United States. Likewise, many of the Nazis' ideas and practices found precedents, parallels, and eager emulators

beyond Germany's borders. Yet at the same time, the planned nature, scale, and organization of Nazi violence, and the fact that it was the Nazis' own fellow citizens who were the first to be transformed into the objects of murderous social engineering, remain distinctive and horrifying historical problems that provide the vanishing point for any serious analysis of the origins, content, and function of Nazi racial thinking.

We should also note that "racial state" is used in this volume more as a kind of shorthand than as a precise term. For one thing, we follow Burleigh and Wippermann in not treating "state" narrowly. A good part of the apparatus of imagination and enforcement in Burleigh and Wippermann's analysis and in the essays in this volume lies outside the state proper. "Racial regime" might be a better description, but even that title would not capture the fact that we are as interested in the boundary lines between regime and society as in the regime's apparatus *per se*.

#### QUESTIONING THE CONSENSUS ABOUT NAZI RACIAL IDEOLOGY

In the years since the publication of *The Racial State*, many historians of the Third Reich have followed Burleigh and Wippermann in emphasizing racial ideology, racial policy, and racial engineering, as at least three historiographical developments make clear. First, the now quite extensive literature on the role of science, especially medicine and the life sciences, under the Nazi regime – much of it associated with the research program on the history of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institutes in the Nazi era – has more fully documented the involvement of medical doctors, human geneticists, and racial anthropologists in the racial policies and crimes of the Third Reich.<sup>24</sup> Second, a series of studies – including Ulrich Herbert's biography of Werner Best and Michael Wildt's study of the higher officials of the Reichssicherheitshauptamt – have focused on the central role of ideology for an elite group of academically trained Holocaust perpetrators who held leadership positions in the SS, police, and security apparatus.<sup>25</sup> While in the debate over the origins of the Holocaust the "intentionalists" had limited the question of ideology almost exclusively to that of Hitler's intentions and the "functionalists" had tried to explain the Holocaust through a process of "cumulative radicalization" at the Nazi regime's periphery without paying much attention to ideology,<sup>26</sup> these new studies in *Täterforschung* have modified the "functionalist" paradigm by examining the ideological factors that explain the readiness, even eagerness, of so many perpetrators to drive the process of cumulative radicalization

forward in the direction of mass murder.<sup>27</sup> Finally, building on Detlev Peukert's aforementioned book *Volksgenossen und Gemeinschaftsfremde*, some of the recent studies that draw on the concept of the *Volksgemeinschaft* to examine German society in the Nazi era have stressed the key role of racial ideology in the larger society by focusing on the "dialectic of inclusion and exclusion" as a central element in the functioning of the *Volksgemeinschaft*.<sup>28</sup>

Concealed behind the common analytical language of race, however, are significant differences in the ways in which "race" is used and understood in these studies. Therefore, one of this volume's principal aims is to render visible the remarkable range of meanings and ambiguities inherent in using "race" and the "racial state" as analytical categories in the Nazi context. To take just one example, biology was clearly much more prominent in the debates about science and race than in those about the racializing of the *Volksgemeinschaft*. But the present volume also seeks to go further by challenging our assumptions about the relationship between racial ideology, race speech and policies, popular participation, and racial violence. Can we really see the spirit of science (particularly the biosciences) behind Nazi racial thinking and policy? Is it clear that the scientific exploration of race dovetailed with Nazi rhetoric, or that eugenic thinking and the murder of the handicapped were as closely connected as has been claimed? How coherent was the Nazis' overarching racial ideology and program? Have we perhaps lost sight of the fragmentary, instrumental, and performative character of Nazi racial discourse? What was the relationship between its overarching vision and the persecution of particular groups? How did the Nazis' racial policy connect to their other social objectives? Can we really encapsulate the mantra of "world Jewry" as the enemy under the mantle of "race thinking"? Did the Nazis draw on a "colonial archive" of racial theories, or was the ethnic violence in Europe's "rimlands" and "shatterzones" a more significant precedent?

As noted earlier, this volume defines the "state" in "racial state" very broadly. A central characteristic of the Nazi regime was, after all, the involvement in policy-making of a multitude of Party and para-state actors, who both infiltrated and competed with the inherited state bureaucracy. This competition and partial cooptation enhanced the regime's energy and reach, even if it often led to conflict and obstruction between agencies. Looking beyond the world of Party agencies, a vital source of the regime's power was the degree to which it enjoyed legitimacy and support among the population. A number of contributors thus question

the nature of the relationship between racial thinking and racial policy and the allegiances that motivated and sustained the regime. Was the language of the *Volksgemeinschaft* in its popular reception really based on notions of biological inheritance, or was it closer to a form of nationalism with ethnic overtones?

In approaching these issues, the contributors do not share a single line, and a number would no doubt disagree with at least some of the propositions advanced by the editors in this introduction. All, however, agree that, despite the wealth of research on Nazi Germany, important facets of race and racial policy remain seriously underexplored, while others have been subject to the most varied and contradictory interpretations. The remainder of this introduction outlines the collection's structure and the individual essays before offering some concluding thoughts about future directions for research.

#### COMPARATIVE AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

If the major thrust of the present volume is to complicate the concept of the Nazi racial state, as a matter of ideology and as a matter of policy and everyday practice, another dimension is to situate this ideology and policy in a broader historical context. One central element in the racial state paradigm, certainly as first articulated by Burleigh and Wippermann, has been to argue that the Third Reich was highly unusual – perhaps unique – in its use of race as a category of social policy. We problematize this assumption in two respects. First, several chapters – those by Mark Roseman, Donald Bloxham, and Pascal Grosse – expand the temporal and spatial frame of reference by situating Nazi racial ideas and policies in a broader, European and colonial context. Second, a number of chapters, including Roseman's and Devin Pendas's, take a comparative approach, contrasting the Third Reich to other overtly racist and genocidal regimes.

Mark Roseman seeks to situate Nazi racial views in a longer perspective. He sees Nazi racism as part of a more diffuse, though potentially destructive, set of narratives of difference that one can broadly group under the label of radical nationalism, noting that the Nazis' "ruthless destruction of perceived enemies was more akin to the goals of radical nationalist regimes. To this they added a new style of 'postcolonial' imperialism, aiming at claiming land through settlement and expelling or even eliminating the original occupants. The language of race accompanied much of this, but did not drive it." Nazi racial language was far from coherent or homogeneous, comprising an admixture of scientific

*Introduction*

9

and cultural concepts that blurred the distinctions between race, ethnicity, and nation. Moreover, race competed with *Volk* as the central concept in Nazi ideology, and indeed, Roseman argues, it was the language of *Volk*, rather than race, that served a primary mobilizing function in the Third Reich. After World War I, *Volk* served as a language of patriotism and nationalism, a way of defining what it meant to be a true German that was far from biological.

Biological racism was the “hard edge” of this broader cultural nationalism that, Roseman argues, was at the heart of the Nazi project. In this light, he suggests it is necessary to differentiate what he terms “socially stratifying” and “nationally demarcating” racisms. He sees race as having a far more distinctive political function in those contexts where “race served to enforce the rules of unequal coexistence.” But where race “marked the boundaries of the national community [it] was always . . . a secondary attribute to nation.” While stratifying racism can be extraordinarily violent in some segregationist contexts or in the case of slavery, Roseman suggests that demarcating racism may be more likely to lead to genocide and ethnic cleansing. This has less to do with biological-racial imperatives, however, than it does with demands for national exclusivity. In Roseman’s view, genocide is as much (or more) an artifact of nationalism and nation-building as it is an outgrowth of biological-racial thinking.

Donald Bloxham argues that a transnational approach to the history of the Third Reich involves “thinking of continuums and interrelationships in the policies of different states.” This is not so much a comparative project – contrasting racial policies in distinct, if more or less similar, contexts – as it is a way to trace the genealogy of Nazi ideas and policies to a much older, and much broader, European tradition. Bloxham suggests that Nazi genocide was a continuation by other, even more murderous, means of population-engineering and -transfer projects that dated back to the nineteenth century. These projects were not the exclusive purview of authoritarian or “totalitarian” states. The Final Solution, he argues, needs to be understood in “an age of wider European genocide and ethnic cleansing in which similar patterns can be discerned across very different states.” In this sense, it constitutes “an only partly discrete episode in a wider European process of violent flux.” From this vantage point, geopolitics loom as large as (or larger than) racial ideology in the history of European genocide. Of course, one might add that this is true only within a certain conceptual frame in which populations themselves could be construed as “problems” and “resources,” an aspect perhaps of

what Zygmunt Baumann famously called the “gardening state.”<sup>29</sup> In Bloxham’s analysis, there is thus a marked continuity from the ethnic (or ethnoreligious) cleansing of Muslims from the newly independent territories of the receding Ottoman empire in Southeastern Europe in the last third of the nineteenth century, through the reciprocal expulsions of Bulgarians, Hungarians, Romanians, Poles, Ukrainians, and others across the shifting borders of Eastern Europe in the first third of the twentieth century, to the Nazi genocide of the Jews. Seen in this light, the Holocaust becomes a particularly acute moment in what Bloxham has elsewhere called the “unweaving of Europe.”<sup>30</sup>

Like Bloxham, Grosse argues for a longer-term perspective on Nazi racism and racial policy. His context, however, is not European population transfer but rather the rise of eugenics and the history of German colonialism. He argues that “eugenics bore a complex intellectual matrix in the context of German colonialism” and, as a result, “territorial expansion became intertwined with racial politics.” In this sense, Grosse argues, there is an ineluctable tension between racism – with its colonial sense of space – and the bourgeois nation-state, which gave the Third Reich its characteristic dynamism. Starting in the late nineteenth century, the earlier European tradition of typologizing peoples according to physical and phenotypical characteristics gave way to a Darwinian and eugenic emphasis on “descent.” It was this understanding of race as a form of genealogy, Grosse maintains, that held Nazi racial policies together. This shift from typology to genealogy had profound practical implications. “Politically, a genealogical approach to race supersedes territorial boundaries defined by nation-states, as genealogies intrinsically reach across frontiers.” In contrast to Roseman, Grosse argues that Nazi racism was “incongruent with existing nation-states.” In this sense, race was always a deeply *colonial* concept. The key element here, according to Grosse, was the fact that this genealogical, eugenic understanding of race was future-oriented. The question was how Germans could conquer racially “other” spaces, such as the tropics (or later Eastern Europe), while remaining “white” and “German/Aryan.” The answer was a eugenic consensus, one with several key implications: “the nexus between race and space was redrawn, racialized notions of citizenship emerged, and finally, traditional boundaries between the civil and military spheres were erased.”

If one way of reframing the context for understanding Nazi racism and genocide is to treat it as part of a longstanding framework of European imperialism, another is to compare it to other regimes in distinct historical contexts. Clearly, the Nazi state was neither the first nor the last in world

*Introduction*

II

history for which race was a useful category of social analysis and policy formulation. The value of such comparative analysis is that it highlights both similarities and differences and can thus illuminate aspects of the Third Reich that are less obvious when viewed from within a purely national frame. In this respect, Pendas contends that the Nazis shared with several other regimes – including European colonial empires, the Jim Crow South, and apartheid-era South Africa – a desire to differentiate dominant and subordinate groups on the basis of often loosely defined racial categories. Across a number of domains of social life – sexual relations, labor relations, and citizenship – these states all adopted related policies. At the same time, Pendas argues, there was a fundamental difference between states whose racial policies operated along the global color-line and the Third Reich, which sought to constitute racial difference entirely among Europeans, all on the “white” side of the color-line. This difference, he suggests, may help account for the rather more violent character of Nazi racism. Because Jews could collectively “pass” for “Aryan,” they were perceived as a particularly dangerous threat, one that demanded some kind of permanent solution – a solution that ultimately took the form of genocide.

Burleigh and Wippermann developed the racial state paradigm in part out of a desire to argue that the Third Reich must not be understood as a variant of welfare-state modernity. Nazism was not, they insisted, one version of some more general phenomenon but a specific, indeed unique, political form, distinguished by its use of race as *the* organizing category for social policy. According to Burleigh and Wipperman, the Nazi racial state was both more comprehensive than other racist regimes and – *as a consequence* – also more murderous. The utopian quality of Nazi racism, on this reading, points to a thoroughgoing reorganization of *German* society on racial lines, and also to the radical, and ultimately final, exclusion of racially undesirable elements. In other words, Burleigh and Wippermann argue that the Third Reich was both uniquely racist and as a result uniquely violent. The essays in the first section of this volume all challenge aspects of this view, though not necessarily the same ones. Grosse and Pendas reject the claim that Nazi racism was unique or unprecedented. They each present a broader comparative and transnational history of race and racism that refutes the notion that the Nazis had a uniquely comprehensive or coherent racial vision, without gainsaying the extraordinary violence and global aspirations of the Nazis’ policies. Both accept that Nazi genocide had a racial dimension. Bloxham and Roseman, on the other hand, challenge

the intrinsic connection that Burleigh and Wippermann drew between racism and genocide. Drawing on a comparative and transnational history of violence, they argue that religion could be quite as murderous as race, and that it was radical nationalism, not racism, that was the common ingredient in European genocides. For all their differences, these four essays share a common goal of widening the context in which the history of the Third Reich is considered and linking it to broader European trends.

#### RACE, SCIENCE, AND NAZI BIOPOLITICS

As noted above, Burleigh and Wippermann's *The Racial State* drew on a wave of pioneering research on the history of medicine in Nazi Germany, especially on eugenics and the "euthanasia" program, published in the 1980s. One of the book's central arguments was that German doctors, academics, and scientists "voluntarily and enthusiastically put their skills at the service of the regime" in order to "create . . . the conceptual framework and scientific legitimization for the implementation of Nazi racial policy."<sup>31</sup> While German doctors' and scientists' complicity with the Nazi regime, confirmed by all subsequent research, is beyond dispute, the essays in this section take issue with Burleigh and Wippermann's implication that Nazi-era eugenics, anthropology, and *Rassenforschung* created a coherent scientific framework for Nazi eugenic and racial policy. In addition to probing the incoherence, heterogeneity, and contradictions of racial science in the Third Reich, some of the essays also question Burleigh and Wippermann's claim that science under the Nazi regime was "inherently distorted," asking whether it was not, in many respects, "normal science." Finally, some of the essays challenge Detlev Peukert's thesis that the final solution resulted from a "fatal racist dynamic in the human sciences"; that thesis, although it differs from Burleigh and Wippermann's views, is also part of the "racial state paradigm" in the larger historiographical sense.<sup>32</sup>

The section opens with Richard Wetzell's contribution, which argues that we must distinguish the question of the complicity of German racial scientists – including eugenicists, anthropologists, human geneticists, and *Rassenforscher* – in Nazi eugenic and racial policy from the question of what influence these scientists had on the shaping of Nazi eugenic and racial policy. While the bioscientists' widespread complicity is now well documented, Wetzell challenges the claims that Nazi racial science

“created the conceptual framework” for Nazi racial policy (Burleigh and Wippermann) or that Nazi racial policy was propelled by a “fatal racist dynamic” in the biosciences (Peukert). Racial science could not have provided a coherent conceptual framework because the field was characterized by competing conceptions of race and heredity, which frequently led to controversies and conflicts, three of which are examined in the first part of Wetzell’s chapter. In assessing racial science’s influence on policy, Wetzell argues, one has to differentiate between different scientific fields and different areas of Nazi policy. Whereas key figures in the eugenics movement were indeed eager to cooperate with the Nazi regime in order to implement their eugenic agenda and actively sought to radicalize Nazi eugenic policy, German anthropologists and *Rassenforscher* certainly contributed to and participated in Nazi racial policy but did not shape or radicalize it to nearly the same extent as eugenicists did in the case of Nazi eugenic policy. Instead of using “race” as an analytical category for understanding the Third Reich, Wetzell contends, we must recognize that “race” was a diffuse concept whose competing and contested meanings in the Third Reich are in need of historical analysis. A careful examination of the interaction of racial science with the Nazi regime, he argues, should elucidate how both scientists and Nazi officials deployed competing conceptions of race for various strategic purposes at different points in the development of the Nazi regime.

The essays by Dan Stone and Christian Geulen both grapple with the incoherence of Nazi racial thinking, but come up with quite different solutions to the historical question this raises. Stone calls for distinguishing two different “registers” of racial thinking: “race science” and “race mysticism.” He argues that Nazi anti-Semitism, the identification of the Jews as a dangerous and polluting race, derived not from race science but from “mystical race thinking”; race science was then drafted to lend legitimacy and placed at the service of “a fundamentally mystical or non-rational idea,” a kind of “Aryan salvation history.” Building on this distinction, Stone criticizes interpretations that assign racial science a central role in Nazi Germany and draw a straight line from the sterilization law to the euthanasia program and on to the Holocaust. Furthermore, he argues that researchers focusing on the history of science have fallen victim to a “methodological fallacy”: their focus on scientific sources has made it appear as if Nazi racial legislation and the Holocaust were the result of the activities of racial scientists, whereas in reality, all the key decisions regarding eugenic and racial policy, the euthanasia

murders of the mentally ill, and the mass murder of the European Jews were made by the Nazi leadership. In Nazi Germany, Stone contends, race was “too important to be left to the race scientists”; the scientists needed the regime more than the regime needed the scientists. Placing Holocaust historiography in a comparative context, Stone concludes by arguing that recent genocide studies have been characterized by two key mistakes: taking “race thinking” to be synonymous with “race science” and downplaying the circumstances in which race theory is mobilized.

Christian Geulen’s chapter begins with an analysis of the “rules of racial conduct” that Goebbels’s Ministry of Propaganda issued in 1935. The document’s use of the term *Volk* leads him to explicate a turn-of-the-century semantic shift in the German concepts of *Volk* and *Nation*, by which the formerly political term *Volk* became a marker of the nation. By the post-World War I period, he argues, *völkisch* notions of Germanness no longer functioned as references to a prehistoric racial nation but rather as an impetus to artificially reconstruct the nation through “technologies of race building.” For the Nazi era, Geulen stresses the incoherence of Nazi racial thinking, arguing that the Nazis intertwined “the mythical and the biological meaning of race” and “did not really care” whether their racial politics was “scientifically valid.” Given the incoherence of Nazi racial thinking, Geulen asks what function it served in the Nazi regime. His answer is that racial thinking in the Third Reich was not a “belief system determining politics and society”; it did not provide a “racial master plan” and did not serve to define racial superiority and inferiority. Instead, the “inner logic of racial thinking” served a “more limited” function, namely, to give plausibility to the notion that all social and political life was a Darwinian struggle for existence and thus to strengthen the imperative to “enforce the racial struggle as such.”

The section’s final chapter, by Herwig Czech, examines the connection between Nazi eugenics and the euthanasia murders of the mentally ill. According to Czech, the euthanasia killings followed an economic rather than a eugenic logic because the primary criterion for selection was the inability to perform productive work, rather than hereditary illness. While the almost complete irrelevance of eugenic criteria in the euthanasia program has led others to conclude that the murder of the mentally ill cannot be explained as the logical outcome of Nazi eugenic thinking, Czech, by contrast, argues that Nazi eugenics and the euthanasia murders were “based on the same logic” because, to a considerable extent, Nazi “health and welfare” policy also used socio-economic rather than genetic criteria. In a detailed examination of the activities of “public health

offices,” Czech argues that both their hereditary health surveys and their implementation of positive and negative eugenics, including forced sterilization, showed “a strong bias toward social diagnostics” rather than “genetic pathologies in the strict sense.” In conclusion, he suggests broadening the concept of racism in order to integrate the role that social and economic factors played in Nazi eugenics, euthanasia, and racial policy.

#### ANTI-SEMITISM BEYOND RACE

The essays in this section all examine the relationship between anti-Semitic speech and policy, on the one hand, and explicitly biological or racial thinking on the other. Within the racial state paradigm, anti-Semitic policy was simply the most prominent element of an increasingly murderous assault on non-German races. It drew on a biologized and racialized rewriting of an older anti-Semitism. But in different ways, each of the contributors in this section show that speech acts, policy, and violence toward Jews were far from being simply a component of a broader racial program, and often bore only an oblique relationship to biological understanding of race.

Jürgen Matthäus argues that historians have spent far too much time focusing on the mindset or ideology of the practitioners and far too little exploring the complex history of the policy process. As he demonstrates, political policies in the Third Reich were very far from being simply “ideas turned into action,” and the complicated relationship between measures against Jews and other racial policies has been barely explored. Focusing on the regime’s early years and highlighting the central role of the Reich Interior Ministry, Matthäus reveals that while there was a striking commitment among senior civil servants to pursue both eugenic and anti-Semitic measures as part of a comprehensive racial agenda, their efforts led to quite different legislative outcomes. Anti-Jewish measures were initially constrained by economic and diplomatic concerns, in contrast to the quite radical sterilization policies adopted against Aryans of supposed inferior biological quality. As the regime consolidated its position, however, the balance between domestic pressures, economic restraints, and diplomatic concerns shifted. By 1935, Jews could be legislatively targeted as such in the Nuremberg Laws, but the all-encompassing language targeting non-Aryans that had appeared in some 1933 legislation was now dropped to avoid offending potential non-Aryan allies abroad. The Four Year Plan of 1936 would change the rules of the game again,

creating a new economic impetus to target Jewish assets and also bring new players onto the scene, though in the ensuing turf wars the Interior Ministry would continue to play a more significant role than has often been acknowledged.

Richard Steigmann-Gall argues that race's role and content in Nazi Germany has been surprisingly under-theorized. He notes, for example, that the mosaic of Nazi victims consisted almost exclusively of outgroups that had been subject to discrimination long before biological language emerged. As he argues, many leading Nazis acknowledged the cultural and spiritual components in the definition and formation of race. Hitler himself argued that a "spiritual" race was more durable than a "natural" one, whatever that meant, and Jews in particular were seen by many Nazis as something other than a biological entity. From this starting point, Steigmann-Gall goes on to explore the remarkable degree to which Christian ideas and imagery remained at the core of Nazi anti-Semitism. These factors lead Steigmann-Gall to see biological thinking less as the source of determinative logic in Nazi policy and more as a discursive edifice superimposed on older cultural and religious prejudices and oppositions.

In similar vein, Dirk Rupnow examines the place, function, and content of Nazi academic research into "the Jewish question." After the Nazis came to power, the advocates of research on Jews sought to make it into a discipline in its own right for the first time. A striking range of institutional players was involved, not just in Germany but also during the war in the occupied territories. Their claim to scientific objectivity was belied by the notion of "fighting scholarship," and in reality a powerfully anti-Jewish line united the competing practitioners. All were agreed on assigning the Jewish question centrality in German history. Despite the lip-service paid to biological ideas, Rupnow argues that research into Jews was not primarily based on racial biology or physical anthropology; instead, the "Jewish spirit" and "Jewish mind" figured heavily in Nazi *Judenforschung*. There was nevertheless considerable cross-referencing between the historical and social research into the Jewish spirit, and medical research by racial scientists of the stamp of Otmar von Verschuer. Humanists and racial biologists referred to each other's work to try to compensate for the lack of any consistent evidence for Jews' racial character. The practitioners of *Judenforschung* not only provided broad legitimation for Nazi anti-Jewish policies as a whole but also were directly implicated in advisory decisions on the Jewish character of specific sub-groups.

## RACE AND SOCIETY

If the “racial state” has established itself as shorthand for the Nazi regime, the “racial society” has not enjoyed similar currency as a way of describing German society under Nazi rule. True, recent work has emphasized the Nazis’ ability racially to groom the population, the success and appeal of their notion of *Volksgemeinschaft*, and even their success in fostering a sense of common identity in relation to genocide. But no one is claiming that, in the short period of Nazi rule, the German population was or ever could have been transformed into a *Rassengesellschaft*, however defined. Whatever German society was in 1933 or 1939 or 1945 was clearly messy, multifaceted, and characterized by a mixture of continuity and change. In that sense, the essays in this section are not confronting a clear-cut paradigm but rather offering new ways of thinking about the place of racial ideology in Germany society, the impact of racial policies on the population, and popular involvement in developing a racial regime. Two of the essays, from Michael Wildt and Annette Timm, are conceptual or methodological, inviting us to think about race’s evolving significance for German identities, relationships, and behavior. Frank Bajohr offers a distinctive and intriguing vantage point from which to observe German society. Martina Kessel and Nicholas Stargardt engage more directly with popular attitudes and behavior, focusing, respectively, on humor in Nazi Germany and popular attitudes during the war.

Michael Wildt has written some of the most influential recent studies of the power of the *Volksgemeinschaft* as slogan, vision, and experience of identity in Nazi Germany. In his contribution here, he approaches the topic from a new angle, showing how the concept evolved from its origins in Imperial Germany through to the Nazi era. The term took on particular significance in the wake of the Kaiser’s speech on the eve of World War I, when the Kaiser declared, to much applause, that he no longer recognized political parties and saw only Germans. In this rhetorical move, *Volksgemeinschaft* could coexist with social and political divisions while also transcending them in common loyalty to Germany. During the 1920s, as Wildt shows, the term was often used to prescribe a desirable societal goal of a social community that transcended class division. But there was also a racial-nationalist variant that predicated the unity of the people on the exclusion of “foreign” races, above all Jews. Building on this eclectic history, Wildt convincingly demonstrates that the appeal of the *Volksgemeinschaft* under Nazi rule drew on the fact that it was not *prima facie* a racist concept, even if the populace increasingly accepted the exclusionary

elements that were integral parts of the Nazi vision. According to Wildt, the utility of the term as an analytical category is thus not that the Third Reich ever *created* a *Volksgemeinschaft*, whatever that might mean, but rather that it alerts us to a project – to the performance and enactment of community by the Nazis, and to its complicated reception by the population. The image of the *Volksgemeinschaft* became an important part of popular experience, but what different groups understood under the term varied considerably.

One of the major contributions of the racial state paradigm was that it incorporated official policies toward women into the “grand narrative” of the history of the Third Reich. The question of women’s relationship to the regime, however, was, as Annette Timm reminds us, always contentious, and it became even more complex once the paradigm of gender replaced an older generation of women’s history (although it remains the case that gendered analysis of women is still far more common than analyses of masculinity in Nazi Germany). Older standoffs over women as perpetrators or victims have been replaced by new arguments about the scope for agency and self-assertion. In addition to offering a wide-ranging account of the place of race in gendered approaches to the history of Nazi Germany, Timm’s particular contribution is to ask how thinking about the history of emotions might transform our understanding of race. She argues that assessing women’s relation to the Nazi regime in terms of “hot emotions,” such as love, desire, or even anger, helps reveal the ways in which the “rewards of belonging” helped secure the loyalty of everyday citizens, and obscured their growing complicity in the regime’s genocidal policies.

Frank Bajohr examines perceptions of the Third Reich among foreign diplomats who served in Germany between 1933 and 1945. He notes that these often highly perceptive outside observers anticipated most of the historiographical interpretations of the Nazi regime offered after the war – with the notable exception of the racial state paradigm. They variously characterized it as a strong or weak dictatorship, as repressive or popular, as conservative or radical. But none of them characterized it as a racial regime. It is not that they failed to perceive the Nazis’ racism – how could they? – but they did not attribute to it any general significance as a descriptor of the regime. He explains this in part with reference to the necessary focus in these diplomatic observations on matters of foreign policy. At the same time, however, he argues that their views reveal the striking plasticity of the regime, its constantly shifting policies and priorities, which the diplomats characterized as a radical unpredictability.

These contemporary foreign observers saw nothing of the coherence implied in the concept of a racial state.

In older scholarship on Nazi Germany, jokes from the period were often cited as a way of showing the population's distance from the regime and its skepticism about Nazi leaders, Nazi slogans, and the Nazis' ability to deliver on their promises. By contrast, Martina Kessel reads the (largely unfunny) Nazi joke as collusion with the regime and as consciously or unconsciously performing social exclusion of the unwanted, above all of Jews. Not only was this humor thus not an act of covert opposition but in fact, she argues, it became part of an agreed and almost required communication style, by which acceptance of the exclusionary terms of community was signaled through anti-Jewish jokes. This kind of humor drew on and transformed older traditions of anti-Semitic German jokes. Such jokes, she argues, were not racist in the sense of being based on ideas about biological difference but were a form of "cultural performance" of Germanness. Racist jokes both articulated and created cultural-racial differences, and signaled inclusion for the joke-teller at the same time as they enforced the exclusion of the object of the joke.

Of all the contributors to this section, it is Nicholas Stargardt who most explicitly questions the degree to which the population bought into the Nazis' racial ideology. While recognizing the value of recent discussions of the *Volksgemeinschaft*, Stargardt argues in his essay that the concept has often been deployed in a crudely functional way, taking the regime's murderous energy as the measure of popular acceptance of its ideas. Instead, Stargardt seeks to uncover the complexity of the German people's views during the war, and the way radicalization of attitudes could go hand in hand with a loss of trust in the regime. The war, he shows, was no plebiscite on Nazi ideology, even if it did at times help to forge a sense of national solidarity on the home front. The real shared sentiment was of the need to defend a beleaguered nation – a powerful defensive-aggressive nationalism that long predated the Nazis, and on which the regime drew to the end. The legitimacy of the war thus went unquestioned even as the regime lost support. Yet Germans had, willy-nilly, to accommodate to the war the Nazis imposed on them, and at different times and in this context the discourse of *Volksgemeinschaft* could be deployed to different ends. Many Germans accepted the premise that this was a "Jewish" war and that world Jewry was somehow coordinating the opposition, even while they began to worry that Allied bombing represented just retribution for Germany's crimes against the Jews.

## RACE WAR? GERMANS AND NON-GERMANS IN WARTIME

Much of the literature discussing the Third Reich as a racial state focuses on the prewar period, when the Nazi regime sought ways to implement social policy in accordance with its ideological predilections. Yet the Third Reich spent fully half of its brief, terrible existence at war. Given that one of the ironic consequences of Germany's initial military successes was to massively expand the foreign populations under German control, the crucial question becomes: To what extent and in what ways did race inform Nazi policies in occupied territories or regarding "undesirable" peoples?

The racial state paradigm would lead one to assume this was, for the Nazis, viewed exclusively as a problem to be solved by means of violent exclusion and mass murder. The war itself is cast, on this view, as a straightforward race war, an understanding nicely captured in Lucy Dawidowicz's description of the Holocaust as a "war against the Jews."<sup>33</sup> Yet, as historians have long recognized, there was in fact a great deal of vacillation in Nazi occupation policy, and even anti-Jewish measures did not simply proceed on a linear path from discrimination to genocide. Often, this is presented as a concession to practicality on the part of a regime whose preferences were for ideological purity. The essays in this section take a different tack. First, they demonstrate that since race was such an ambiguous and ill-defined concept, Nazi bureaucrats were often able to give it whatever content suited their local needs at a given point in time. Second, they show that competing logics – economic and patriarchal – were not secondary considerations that at times trumped primary, racial ideological constructs for pragmatic reasons. Rather, they were themselves primary ideological categories for the regime – ones which at times complemented and at other times supplanted racial concepts, not for pragmatic but for ideological reasons.

Gerhard Wolf examines Nazi Germanization policies in occupied Poland, where procedures were put in place for determining which members of the local population were suitable for German citizenship. What is striking in this instance is that in the initial policy as formulated by the Reich Interior Ministry, it was *völkisch* rather than racial criteria that mattered. Here it was ethnic rather than biological markers that were key. As a ministry decree put it, "language, education, culture, etc." were what indicated membership in the German *Volk* among Christian Poles and *Volksdeutsche*. (Jews were perforce excluded.) It was not even necessary to prove that one had German ancestors in order to prove German

*Introduction*

21

ethnicity; it was far more important that one declare one's belonging to the German people. This implied a very expansive and largely voluntarist understanding of Germandom. Himmler and the SS challenged this expansive view, pushing for a more restrictive, racialized policy, and even though this view won out in the bureaucratic tussle, in the end the "racial screenings" proposed by the SS amounted to little. This was because the racial language imposed by the SS was exploited by the Interior Ministry to create a more inclusive policy in practice than Himmler seemed to have envisaged in theory. Less than 10 percent of the population ended up undergoing racial screenings. According to Wolf, this indicates that

If some aspects of Nazi ideology, such as race, proved to be dysfunctional by, for example, interfering with the need of formulating a coherent occupation policy . . . and thus threatening the reproduction of the political system itself, even hardcore Nazis cared little for Hitler's writing but instead turned into ideological entrepreneurs, themselves co-contributing to what in any case was the incoherent corpus constituting Nazi ideology.

Ideology did not dictate policy but functioned rather as a resource to be mobilized and redefined in the internal disputes over the proper course of action. Race was a moving target, subject to constant redefinition; it could be used as a label that was applied to policies of very different sorts, deployed for purposes of inclusion as much as exclusion.

If Wolf reveals that, during the war, racial ideology did not preordain a more radical, exclusionary, murderous policy, Regina Mühlhäuser and Stefan Hördler each demonstrate, in distinct ways, that race could work in tandem with – and even be trumped by – alternate logics. Mühlhäuser examines wartime sexual encounters on the eastern front and Wehrmacht and SS efforts to police them. Nazi racism, like its counterparts elsewhere, tended to focus on miscegenation as a particularly grave threat. This would seem to require draconian policies against fraternization with the racially inferior Slavs whom the Germans encountered on the eastern front. Yet this racial logic ran counter to another potent ideological construct: male sexual prerogative. As Mühlhäuser puts it, "a large number of men acted on the assumption that they were entitled to almost unlimited access to women's bodies." The result of these conflicting imperatives – racial purity and sexual privilege – was a weak and inconsistently enforced policy of prohibition on sexual encounters – consensual or coerced, hetero- and homosexual – between German troops and local residents. According to Mühlhäuser, this inconsistency reveals not just the power of patriarchal attitudes to trump racist commitments but also

the internal limitations of racism itself, as both individual soldiers and Nazi authorities “harbored contradictory ideas” about the racial value of the Soviets they encountered. For instance, race rarely factored into rape prosecutions, which focused on the harm done to the Wehrmacht’s reputation and military discipline. Mühlhäuser concludes that for individual German soldiers and SS men, their degree of commitment to Nazi ideology did not necessarily influence their sexual choices in a direct way. At the eastern front, many soldiers and SS men who were more or less enthusiastic Nazis breached the racial laws without assuming they had in any way violated the German idea. When there was a contradiction between competing ideological imperatives, ordinary German soldiers and SS men were able to, in effect, pick and choose between them as circumstances dictated, without necessarily seeing any significant inconsistency.

If it is striking that the eastern front, the *locus classicus* of a war of extermination, opened up a space for alternative ideological priorities, it is perhaps even more surprising that the same is true of the concentration camps. Stefan Hördler argues that as the war progressed, the camps became ever more multi-ethnic, both in terms of the inmate population *and* in terms of the guards, who themselves met the proper racial criteria for the SS in decreasing numbers. According to Hördler, as manpower needs became ever more acute, the camps were increasingly staffed by whoever was available and distinctions between “old” SS men, ethnic Germans, and foreign auxiliaries began to disappear. In this context, ideology no longer served as a driver of criminal behavior and mass murder but at most as a “frame of reference” that could serve to either legitimate violent activities or be deployed instrumentally as a means to an end. Hördler argues that the same was beginning to apply to the inmate population. “Above all in the final years of the war, the racial hierarchy among the inmates was incrementally levelled out.” The manifest need to increase arms production led not just representatives of the army or industry, but even party stalwarts, including Himmler, to prioritize the exploitation of prisoner labor over the murder of racial enemies, culminating in the *Vernichtungsstop* at Auschwitz in November 1944. Although this did little to improve living conditions for the inmates, it did change the criteria for murder. In the final phase of the war, “selections and mass killings were directed above all at those inmates who were viewed, according to the SS three-tier selection system, as unsuitable because of illness or general physical exhaustion. There is no evidence for a primarily

racially motivated selection.” In the end, genocide was subsumed into a more utilitarian, though no less brutal, policy of exploitation.

The war exacerbated inconsistencies and contradictions within Nazi racial ideology that had already been apparent before 1939. It opened up a space for race to be reinterpreted by entrepreneurial bureaucrats. This could – and often did – lead to a dynamic of “cumulative radicalization,” but it also could, and did, lead to contradictory impulses, toward greater inclusion of “Germanized” non-Germans, toward the exploitation of labor and sexual opportunity, even when the targets were racially inferior. The war, in other words, made a complicated conceptual and policy landscape even more complex. This means that any adequate characterization of the Third Reich at war needs to consider multiple conceptual frameworks, divergent policy impulses, and the changing fortunes of war.

#### CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

Book titles that claim to be “beyond” reveal two things: first, that the book in question is defined by a critique of the phenomenon or concept that it seeks to transcend, but second, that what is transcended – the thing the book is “beyond” – is easier to define than the book’s ultimate destination. Certainly the present volume has no simple substitute to offer for the “racial state.” Indeed, Grosse and perhaps also Wildt would seem to be reemphasizing the centrality of race in Nazi ideology and policy while challenging received views of its genealogy. Other critiques of the racial state are partial, for example, Rupnow’s and Steigmann-Gall’s demonstrations that Nazi anti-Semitism cannot easily be subsumed under the rubric of race, or Matthäus’s evidence of the contingencies and political considerations that helped to shape the evolution of Nazi policy. No one is denying that the Nazis constructed an elaborate set of racial policies or launched a barrage of racial rhetoric.

The broadest critique of the racial state paradigm can be found in the contributions from Bloxham, Roseman, and others that attribute Nazi violence not to the demands of racial thought in particular but to the intersection between a much broader set of modern vocabularies of difference (in which some notion of the nation often acted as the core anchor for distinguishing between “them” and “us,” on the one hand, and the state broadly defined, on the other). Here, international competition in the circumstances of the late nineteenth century and interwar Europe, coupled with an increasingly biopolitical conception of population quality

as a source of national strength, were instrumental in giving rise to violent and sometimes genocidal projects. Race thinking was, as Bloxham argues, merely one element on a much broader continuum, and religio-ethnic difference could be just as explosive. The central thrust of this critique is thus to reject the idea that racial ideas and racial bureaucracy (whose existence is not in question) constituted the decisive locus of explanation for Nazi violence and murder. That same critique can be found in Pendas's comparative framing, which shows the parallels between the Nazi and other racial states while noting the massive differences in their trajectories.

Another of the volume's core positions, exemplified by contributions from Czech, Stone, Wetzell, and others, is that the "science" of race – whether understood as biological science or just as professionally conducted *Wissenschaft*, which could also be social science – did not provide the knowledge or conclusions that motivated Nazi policy. Contributions from Hördler, Mühlberger, and Wolfe show that, even when loosely defined, racial distinctions were often a poor guide to important elements of Nazi policy. No single line emerges from the volume on race's place in Nazi society – either in terms of Nazi social policy or in society's response to the regime – though Bajohr, Kessel, Stargardt, and Timm each bring innovative methodological lenses to the question. All these essays invite further study to locate race's place in the evolving economies of sentiment, loyalty, and identity in peace and war under Nazi rule.

One possibility opened up by the volume is to shift attention from racial knowledge and theory to racial discourse. The very vagueness of that discourse may have been the key to its versatility and utility – even if it also meant that racial discourse was more the servant than the agent of policy. In different ways, Stone's and particularly Geulen's contributions open up this possibility and suggest the need for careful charting of the continuum from the policy-directing imperatives of thought, at one end, to the more diffuse legitimating and mobilizing functions of rhetoric, at the other.

Ultimately, our aim was to remind ourselves just how multifaceted, complex and elusive is the relationship between "race," state, and Nazism. We certainly did not aspire to have the last word. We thank our contributors, and the other participants of the original conference on which this volume drew, for their innovative and imaginative approaches to this conversation. And we hope that readers will be inspired to revisit and rethink the shorthand of the racial state.

## Introduction

25

## Notes

- 1 Eve Rosenhaft, “Blacks and gypsies in Nazi Germany: the limits of the ‘racial state,’” *History Workshop Journal* 72 (2011), 161.
- 2 Gerhard Jacoby, *Racial State: The German Nationalities Policy in the Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia* (New York, 1944).
- 3 Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wippermann, *The Racial State: Germany, 1933–1945* (Cambridge, 1991).
- 4 *Ibid.*, 73.
- 5 *Ibid.*, 305.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 2.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 305.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 51.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 56.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 1.
- 11 David Schoenbaum, *Hitler’s Social Revolution: Class and Status in Germany 1933–1939* (New York, 1966); Ralf Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy in Germany* (New York, 1967); Tim Mason, *Sozialpolitik im Dritten Reich: Arbeiterklasse und Volksgemeinschaft* (Opladen, 1977), translated as *Social Policy in the Third Reich*, ed. Jane Caplan (Providence, 1993).
- 12 Detlev Peukert, *Volksgenossen und Gemeinschaftsfremde* (Cologne, 1982), 246, 279, 296; translated as *Inside the Third Reich* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 208, 234–5, 248. Peukert’s essay “The genesis of the ‘Final Solution’ from the spirit of science,” which connects this argument more closely to the role of the modern sciences in the Nazi regime, was first published (in German) in 1989 and had probably not been read by Burleigh and Wippermann when they wrote the book; it is not cited in their footnotes. Detlev Peukert, “Die Genesis der ‘Endlösung’ aus dem Geist der Wissenschaft” in D. Peukert, *Max Webers Diagnose der Moderne* (Göttingen, 1989), 102–21; published in English as Detlev Peukert, “The genesis of the ‘Final Solution’ from the spirit of science,” in David F. Crew (ed.), *Nazism and German Society, 1933–1945: Rewriting Histories* (London, 1994), 274–99.
- 13 *Beiträge zur nationalsozialistischen Gesundheits- und Sozialpolitik* (1985–). In particular, the first six volumes (1985–7) contained pioneering and influential essays on racial and social policy, euthanasia, and eugenics.
- 14 The reference here is to Peukert’s *Volksgenossen und Gemeinschaftsfremde*; Peukert later advanced more radical arguments in his 1989 essay “Die Genesis der ‘Endlösung’.”
- 15 “Editorial” in Götz Aly, Angelika Ebbinghaus, Matthias Hamann, Friedmann Pfäfflin, and Gerd Preissler, *Aussonderung und Tod: Die klinische Hinrichtung der Unbrauchbaren*, vol. 1 of *Beiträge zur nationalsozialistischen Gesundheits- und Sozialpolitik* (Berlin, 1985), 7–8, here 7; Burleigh and Wippermann, *The Racial State*, 4.
- 16 “Editorial” in Götz Aly, Karl Friedrich Masuhr, Maria Lehmann, Karl Heinz Roth, and Ulrich Schultz, *Reform und Gewissen: ‘Euthanasie’ im Dienst des Fortschritts*, vol. 2 of *Beiträge zur nationalsozialistischen Gesundheits- und Sozialpolitik* (Berlin, 1985), 7–8, here 7.

- 17 Burleigh and Wippermann, *The Racial State*, p. 2; for a similar argument, see *ibid.*, 304. *Modernity and the Holocaust* was almost certainly a reference to Zygmunt Baumann's 1989 book of the same title, which Burleigh and Wippermann did not explicitly cite. The important work of Michael Prinz and Rainer Zitelmann on Nazism and modernization appeared only in 1991, the same year that *The Racial State* was published, and is not cited anywhere in the book; see Michael Prinz and Rainer Zitelmann, *Nationalsozialismus und Modernisierung* (Darmstadt, 1991); Rainer Zitelmann, *Hitler, Selbstverständnis eines Revolutionärs*, 3rd edn. (Stuttgart, 1990); Rainer Zitelmann, "Die totalitäre Seite der Moderne" in Michael Prinz and Rainer Zitelmann (eds.), *Nationalsozialismus und Modernisierung* (Darmstadt, 1991), 1–20.
- 18 Burleigh and Wippermann, *The Racial State*, 306–7.
- 19 Mark Roseman, "National Socialism and the end of modernity," *American Historical Review* 116 (2011), 688–701.
- 20 Burleigh and Wippermann, *The Racial State*, 2, 17.
- 21 *Ibid.*, 56.
- 22 *Ibid.*, 56.
- 23 Jacob Robinson, foreword to Gerhard Jacoby, *Racial State: The German Nationalities Policy in the Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia* (New York, 1944), v–viii, here v–vi.
- 24 For an introduction to the vast literature on this subject, see Margit Szöllösi-Janze, *Science in the Third Reich* (Oxford, 2001); Doris Kaufmann (ed.), *Geschichte der Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gesellschaft im Nationalsozialismus: Bestandsaufnahme und Perspektiven der Forschung*, 2 vols. (Göttingen, 2000); Christopher Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich: Linguistics, Racial Anthropology and Genetics in the Dialectic of Volk* (Cambridge, 2005); Susanne Heim, Carola Sachse, and Mark Walker (eds.), *The Kaiser Wilhelm Society under National Socialism* (New York, 2009); Sheila Faith Weiss, *The Nazi Symbiosis: Human Genetics and Politics in the Third Reich* (Chicago, 2010).
- 25 Ulrich Herbert, *Best: Biographische Studien über Radikalismus, Weltanschauung und Vernunft, 1903–1989* (Bonn, 1996); Michael Wildt, *Generation des Unbedingten: Das Führungskorps des Reichssicherheitshauptamtes* (Hamburg, 2002), translated as *An Uncompromising Generation* (Madison, 2010); Lutz Hachtmeister, *Der Gegnerforscher: Die Karriere des SS-Führers Franz Alfred Six* (Munich, 1998); Christian Ingrao, *Believe and Destroy: Intellectuals in the SS War Machine* (Cambridge, 2013).
- 26 On the debate of intentionalists versus functionalists, see Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation*, 4th edn. (London, 2000), 69–92; Mark Roseman, "Beyond conviction? Perpetrators, ideas, and action in the Holocaust in historiographical perspective" in Frank Biess, Mark Roseman, and Hanna Schissler (eds.), *Conflict, Catastrophe and Continuity: Essays on Modern German History* (New York, 2007), 83–103.
- 27 Ulrich Herbert, "Vernichtungspolitik" in U. Herbert (ed.), *Nationalsozialistische Vernichtungspolitik* (Frankfurt, 1998), 9–66, esp. 44–5; see also Michael Wildt, *Geschichte des Nationalsozialismus* (Göttingen, 2008), 13, 171–2; Kershaw, *Nazi Dictatorship*, 263–4; Roseman, "Beyond conviction."

## Introduction

27

- 28 Janosch Steuwer, “Was meint und nützt das Sprechen über ‘Volksgemeinschaft,’” *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, 53 (2013), 487–534, esp. 520–5; Michael Wildt, “‘Volksgemeinschaft’ – Eine Zwischenbilanz” in Dietmar von Reeken and Malte Thießen (eds.), *Volksgemeinschaft als soziale Praxis* (Paderborn, 2013), 355–69, esp. 362ff.; Martina Steber and Bernhard Gotto, “*Volksgemeinschaft*: writing the history of the Nazi regime” in M. Steber and B. Gotto (eds.), *Visions of Community in Nazi Germany: Social Engineering and Private Lives* (Oxford, 2014).
- 29 Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Ithaca, 1989), 13.
- 30 Donald Bloxham, *Genocide, the World Wars and the Unweaving of Europe* (London, 2008).
- 31 Burleigh and Wippermann, *The Racial State*, 51.
- 32 Peukert, “Die Genesis der ‘Endlösung,’” 104.
- 33 Lucy Dawidowicz, *The War Against the Jews, 1933–1945* (New York, 1986).