Beyond the Racial State
Rethinking Nazi Germany

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The ‘racial state’ has become a familiar shorthand for the Third Reich, encapsulating its raison d’être, ambitions, and the underlying logic of its genocidal violence. The Nazi racial state’s agenda is generally understood as a fundamental reshaping of society based on a new hierarchy of racial value. Challenging this interpretation, this volume argues that it is time to reappraise what race really meant under Nazism, and to question and complicate its relationship to the Nazis’ agenda, actions, and appeal. Based on a wealth of new research, the book's essays show that racial knowledge and racial discourse in Nazi Germany were far more contradictory and disparate than we have come to assume. The contributors shed new light on the ways that racial policy worked and was understood, and consider race's function, content, and power in relation to society and nation, and above all, in relation to the extraordinary violence unleashed by the Nazis.


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