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Hitler's Antisemitism and the Horizons of the Racial State

Roman Töppel's prodigious literary detective work has provided the most definitive account of the sources behind the ideas that feature in Hitler's chapter "Volk und Rasse" from *Mein Kampf*. Regarded by both scholars and contemporaries as the key section, "Volk und Rasse" is the eleventh chapter of the book's first volume in which Hitler laid out, in Töppel's words, "the real essence of the National Socialist world view."¹ Hitler not only identifies the central conflict in world history as that between Aryan and Jew, Töppel notes, but he also elaborates on the threat posed by the Jewish presence in terms of blood and "race." Töppel adduces detailed evidence for Hitler's long-observed intellectual "dilettantism" in questions of race and racial theory, marked by his tendency to pick and choose arguments while simply ignoring aspects of theories that might run counter to his own argument. Examples of this include his selective use of the work of Hans F. K. Günther, who expressly rejected the term "Aryan" as well as stereotypes about the physical appearance of Jews, and his dismissal of the idea put forth by Günther and other *völkisch* race theorists that the Jews were to be understood as a *Volk* but not a race. Likewise, Hitler continued to insist on the degenerative effects of miscegenation in spite of arguments to the contrary in (among other works) the *Grundriß der menschlichen Erblichkeitslehre und Rassenhygiene* (1921) by Erwin Baur, Eugen Fischer, and Fritz Lenz, which is otherwise an important source for "Volk und Rasse." Additionally, Töppel finds evidence to explain the unsystematic character of Hitler's thinking in his reading habits, which are documented in eyewitness testimonies and his surviving private library.

Hitler's thinking on "race" was inconsistent, derivative, and intellectually vacuous, even by the standards of a pseudoscience devoted to the study of a wholly constructed category. Although all this will come as no surprise to most readers, Töppel nonetheless provides some valuable food for thought in exposing the genealogy of "Volk und Rasse." By investigating not only the sources for the chapter, but also the circumstances of its composition, he confirms its originary character. The scholarly consensus has been that Hitler's antisemitism was a product of his wartime and postwar experiences, yet the fact that "Volk und Rasse" was first drafted in 1922–23, before his imprisonment in Landsberg that

¹ Roman Töppel, "Volk und Rasse." In *Search of Hitler's Sources*, in this yearbook, pp. 71–110, here p. 77.

provided the impetus and time to write the rest of the first volume, bespeaks how urgent a business it was for Hitler's own politics to think through his antisemitism that was still inchoate at that stage. Töppel thus exposes the way in which Hitler's reflections on blood and race in this part of *Mein Kampf* serve as a retrospective structure for rationalizing and giving articulate voice to his hatred and fear of Jews. As Töppel puts it, given that Hitler's antisemitic statements were significantly more radical than those of any of the thinkers on whose work he drew, what Hitler was doing in "Volk und Rasse" was to use their ideas to cobble together "his own, murderous ideology, whose central theme was a relentless hatred of Jews."² Hitler was giving his visceral antisemitism the argumentative bones and muscle that could make it the basis for an entire political program.

As valuable as it is to see Hitler's *Weltanschauung* thus anatomized, Töppel's analysis is particularly useful in provoking some wider questions about the character and operation of National Socialism. Among these are questions about the functions of reading, ideas and "ideas" in fascist movements, but what I would like to focus on here are questions raised by the indications that in this chapter Hitler is using pseudoscientific principles of "race" to rationalize a pre-existing antisemitism. These questions interrogate the place of this chapter – and Hitler's ideas more broadly – in the construction of a "racial state." Where do Hitler's thoughts about "race" sit in what we now see as a constellation of preconceptions and apprehensions about genetics, bodies, and social hygiene that underpinned the Nazi system of oppression? Indeed, in light of the understanding of this system that currently prevails among historians, what kind of assessment and analysis can adequately situate that originary antisemitism for which "race" was manifestly an afterthought? In short: What (if anything) can Hitler's writings tell us about how "race" became institutionalized in an increasingly destructive spiral of everyday practices? And from this point of view, is "Volk und Rasse" really the key chapter – and, if so, key to what?

I invoke Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wippermann's phrase "racial state"³ here to signal a number of related shifts in the historical understanding of National Socialism whose cumulative effect has been to resituate (Hitler's) antisemitism. At the very least, this concept has redirected attention to how the priority that

² Ibid., p. 110.

³ For the origins, appropriation, and critique of the phrase, see Michael Burleigh/Wolfgang Wippermann, *The Racial State. Germany 1933–1945*, Cambridge 1991; Rita Chin et al. (eds.), *After the Nazi Racial State. Difference and Democracy in Germany and Europe*, Ann Arbor/MI 2009; Eve Rosenhaft, *Blacks and Gypsies in Nazi Germany. The Limits of the "Racial State,"* in: *History Workshop Journal* 72 (2011), pp. 161–70, and Devin O. Pendas/Mark Roseman/Richard F. Wetzell (eds.), *Beyond the Racial State. Rethinking Nazi Germany*, Cambridge 2017.

Hitler gave to the elimination of Jews affected the evolution of the totality of Nazi policy *at any given historical moment*, without necessarily denying its centrality to National Socialism or its peculiarly destructive outcomes. For instance, it has led to increased attention, both in scope and depth, to the “other victims” of Nazi persecution and Nazi body/bio-politics in particular: those defined as “of alien blood” (*fremdblütig*), including notably Sinti and Roma (“Gypsies”) and Blacks; those “of German blood” (*deutschblütig*) but genetically damaged and therefore leading “lives not worthy of life” (*lebensunwertes Leben*), including the disabled and incurably ill; and “aliens to the community” (*Gemeinschaftsfremde*), including homosexuals, “antisocials” (*Asoziale*), and socially marginal individuals, whose condition was defined by the system in terms of a shifting combination of genetic predisposition and antisocial intent. In conjunction with the more long-standing and now well-established functionalist reading of National Socialism as a system, studies of these victim groups have allowed for the elaboration and critique of the proposition that there was a progressive continuity of practice “from euthanasia to the Final Solution,” an idea that was articulated by Henry Friedlander in 1995.⁴ One consequence of this has been to “mainstream” the evidence for the foundational imbrication of health, eugenics, and “race” in Nazi Germany, which had been proposed in relatively specialist legal and medical history studies in the 1980s: an explicit vision of the “unity of eugenic and racial policy” (*Einheit der Erb- und Rassenpflege*) reflected in the notion of “race hygiene” (*Rassenhygiene*) drove Nazi policy and underlay the institutional gears that linked “racial” policy at the top and everyday medical and police practices at the local level.⁵ This unitary vision informed the way in which Wilhelm Frick, as National Socialist Minister of the Interior, guided the development of the relevant legislative infrastructure. And *this* package of eugenic and racial ideas had a genealogy and tradition of its own that, over several decades, had interacted in complicated ways with the specifically antisemitic ideology crystalized in “Volk und Rasse.”

Among other things, of course, eugenic thinking in both positive and negative terms was a global phenomenon in the early twentieth century, and National

⁴ See Henry Friedlander, *The Origins of Nazi Genocide. From Euthanasia to the Final Solution*, Chapel Hill/NC 1995.

⁵ For early specialist studies, see Lothar Gruchmann, “Blutschutzgesetz” und Justiz. Zu Entstehung und Auswirkung des Nürnberger Gesetzes vom 15. September 1935, in: *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 31 (1983), pp. 418–42, and Alfons Labisch/Florian Tennstedt, *Der Weg zum “Gesetz über die Vereinheitlichung des Gesundheitswesens” vom 3. Juli 1934. Entwicklungslinien und -momente des staatlichen und kommunalen Gesundheitswesens in Deutschland*, Düsseldorf 1985.

Socialist policymakers could draw on models found abroad – notably in the United States and Sweden. Such insights signal a second shift in the historiography of the “racial state” since the 1990s, namely a widening of its geographical horizons. A key dimension of this has been the exploration of various links between National Socialism and colonialism. Research on the nature of Germany’s rule in its own colonies before World War I has exposed practices of violent repression and acknowledged genocide in Southwest Africa, and there is also plenty of evidence suggesting that the global color line enforced by European imperialism informed domestic debates about the limits of racial tolerance and the legitimacy of mixed marriage in Wilhelmine Germany, just as in other colonial states. Historians have thus identified specific similarities in practice and discourse between colonial racism on the one hand and Nazi racism and genocide on the other, though the evidence for material continuities remains disputed.⁶ At the same time, considerable attention has been given to identifying and analyzing the colonial features of Nazi foreign policy and, in particular, German occupation policies during World War II (which themselves were prefigured in some German planning efforts during World War I). These notoriously included the “recovery” and promotion of German “blood” from all corners of Europe as well as the subjection of the populations of Eastern Europe and/or their removal in order to enable the settlement of conquered territories by *Deutschblütige*. The movement for settlement in the conquered East depended on the promotion and mobilization among Germans of a mentality that combined enthusiasm for pioneering adventures, a commitment to a civilizing mission, and the certainty of racial superiority in ways very similar to the values that drove nineteenth-century imperialism.⁷ Moreover, Germans had another point of reference for dreams of the frontier, in addition to their very limited experiments with settler colonialism

⁶ See Jürgen Zimmerer, *From Windhoek to Auschwitz. On the Relationship between Colonialism and the Holocaust*, London 2018. For a critique of the continuity thesis, see Birthe Kundrus, *From the Herero to the Holocaust? Some Remarks on the Current Debate*, in: *Africa Spectrum* 40 (2005), pp. 299–308.

⁷ A key study on the mobilization of civilians to settle the East is Elizabeth Harvey, *Women and the Nazi East. Agents and Witnesses of Germanization*, New Haven/CT 2003. For a recent overview, see Birthe Kundrus, *Colonialism, Imperialism, National Socialism. How Imperial Was the Third Reich?* in: Bradley Naranch/Geoff Eley (eds.), *German Colonialism in a Global Age*, Durham/NC 2015, pp. 330–46. The locus classicus for the “turn to the East” in Nazi and Holocaust studies enabled by the post-socialist opening of the archives is now Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands. Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*, London 2010. Here, and more emphatically in his more controversial *Black Earth. The Holocaust as History and Warning*, New York 2015, Snyder envisages Eastern Europe as a contested frontier territory.

or even those of their European rivals: America's conquest and settlement of its own continental hinterland and its celebration of pioneer values imbued with fatal ambivalence towards indigenous populations.⁸

We see very little of this wider landscape of "race" in the chapter "Volk und Rasse," where Hitler is struggling to parse the European canon of racial antisemitism in order to formulate his own political program and rationale for action. But, in fact, its outlines are present in *Mein Kampf*: they are developed at some length in the second volume, written during 1925 and first published in 1926.⁹ While "Volk und Rasse" focuses on the threat embodied by the Jewish presence, the second volume places more emphasis on practical measures to forestall this danger and comparable threats, simultaneously grounding policy prescriptions in more elaborate statements about the character of human races in general and about what constitutes Aryans/Germans in particular. Its first chapter, "Weltanschauung und Partei" (Ideology and Party), sets out a principle of inequality between races that calls for the protection, propagation, and cultivation of those who are the bearers of the highest civilizational values, rising to the vision of "a supreme race as master among nations" (vol. 2, pp. [11–13]). Chapter two, "Der Staat" (The State), shows us the state as the means to this end, whose purpose is to foster a "community of living creatures who are physically and spiritually alike" and the "originary racial elements that are the source of the beauty and dignity characteristic of a higher form of humanity because culture emanates from them" (vol. 2, pp. [23–25]). It thus explicitly draws the argumentative link between biological race, cultural productivity, and state practices.

The themes of miscegenation and hybridization introduced in "Volk und Rasse" recur in "Der Staat." Here Hitler seems to confront biological evidence more directly than in the first volume. While he remains firm on the fundamental principle of blood and the dangers of blood-mixing, he replies directly to argu-

⁸ The most persuasive accounts here are those that emphasize cultural and discursive resonances rather than material continuities or conscious imitation: Kristin Kopp, *Germany's Wild East: Constructing Poland as Colonial Space*, Ann Arbor/MI 2012; Jens-Uwe Guettel, *German Expansionism, Imperial Liberalism, and the United States, 1776–1945*, New York 2013; idem, *The U.S. Frontier as Rationale for the Nazi East? Settler Colonialism and Genocide in Nazi-Occupied Eastern Europe and the American West*, in: *Journal of Genocide Research* 15 (2013), pp. 401–19. Hitler himself cited the influence of the romantic visions of the German novelist Karl May.

⁹ The quotations from "Mein Kampf" are taken from: Hitler, *Mein Kampf. Eine kritische Edition*, ed. by Christian Hartmann et al., commissioned by the Institute for Contemporary History, 2 vols., Munich 2016. In the present article, all quotations from "Mein Kampf" were translated into English by Eve Rosenhaft. The square brackets in this edition indicate the pagination in the first edition of the two volumes of "Mein Kampf" (1925/27).

ments against the idea that hybridization is inherently degenerative. Thus while characterizing successive admixtures of alien blood in historical time as a source of weakness for the German territories, he allows for the possibility that a complete hybridization (*Durchmischung*) would at least have created a unified – and possibly more satisfied – *Volk*. His counter-proposition remains that this *Volk* would have been inferior (vol. 2, pp. [28–29]). In a long passage on the miserable condition of “mongrels” (*Bastarde*) (vol. 2, pp. [31–40]), he suggests that their decline is not absolute, but contingent on the continued existence of peoples who are more powerful because of their purity of blood; in a second step, of course, this becomes an argument for prophylactic measures to prevent the further “mongrelization” that would undermine the pure peoples. And it is indeed in this chapter that not only the prevention of mixed marriages, but also the compulsory sterilization of the diseased and disabled (vol. 2, p. [35]) as well as pro-natalist policies directed at the racially desirable (vol. 2, pp. [37–39]) are advocated, along with positive measures to promote their physical health and strength.

The global and colonial framework in which “race” operates for Hitler as well as his contemporaries is alluded to in “Der Staat” in a reference to the future settlement of conquered territories that will be pioneered by racially pure colonists (vol. 2, pp. [37–38]) and the throwaway line (looking back to the history of colonial migration) that a Black or a Chinese who masters the German language does not thereby become a German (vol. 2, pp. [18–19]). And while the threat posed by a black presence features in “Volk und Rasse” only to bolster antisemitic arguments – “it was and is the Jews who have brought the *Neger* to the Rhineland” (vol. 1, p. [345]) – explicit and implicit references to people of African descent play a prominent role in chapter three of the second volume, “Staatsangehöriger und Staatsbürger” (National and Citizen).

As the title of this third chapter suggests, the key proposition introduced here is that “racial” belonging must be the precondition for membership in the political community: only those of German blood may be citizens (*Staatsbürger*); others who are not legally aliens can at best be “nationals” (*Staatsangehörige*), subject to the laws of the nation but without the corresponding rights. This anticipates the terms of the Reich Citizenship Law, which was one of the key “racial” laws promulgated in 1935 known as the Nuremberg Laws. It is not insignificant that the Nuremberg Laws named only Jews as the people “of alien blood” who were to be excluded from citizenship and, in a second law on “the Protection of German Blood and Honor,” from intermarriage, sexual intercourse, and the sharing of households with those “of German blood” – a point that I will return to later. In “Staatsangehöriger und Staatsbürger,” however, Hitler draws both explicitly and implicitly on examples from the *black* diaspora to build his argument. He cites African migrants in Germany as a negative example: “A *Neger* who

used to live in the German colonies and is now resident in Germany produces a 'German citizen' when he brings a child into the world" (vol. 2, p. [76]). Hitler's statement was in fact entirely spurious, as many German born blacks learned to their cost, because residence in Germany never in itself conferred citizenship and the children of non-citizens did not acquire citizenship by birth in Germany. His positive model is the United States: "The American Union, by refusing physically unhealthy elements the right to immigrate as a matter of principle and simply excluding particular races from the right to citizenship, is already approaching the position that is at the heart of the *völkisch* concept of the state." (vol. 2, p. [78]) What the *völkisch* state will do, he argues, is to introduce consistency by writing the liminal status of *Staatsangehörige* into its constitution.

Töppel points out that sections of "Der Staat" were published with "Volk und Rasse" as a separate booklet from 1936 onwards. Thus, once the Nuremberg Laws were in place (at the latest), the enforcement of a wider vision of "racial" or blood purity through specific constitutional practices – in which the exclusion of Jews was articulated as a *particular* (if particularly urgent) case – was being identified as the core of Hitler's own thinking. A unitary vision of "race hygiene" is implicit in the way that Hitler's statement about American racial policies links health/disease with "race," informing not only persistent Nazi propaganda tropes (the association of Jews and rats in "Volk und Rasse," whose power and ubiquity Töppel reflects on), but also everyday medical and police practices.

Hitler's empirical observations about American practices point directly to the wider universe of sources and influences – the global frame of reference – that Hitler shared with his contemporaries.¹⁰ The statement that people in poor health were not allowed to enter the United States is manifestly true, but rather more problematic is the claim that "certain races" were "simply exclud[ed]" from becoming citizens – since there was no legal or constitutional sanction for exclusion from political rights on the grounds of "race" after 1870. The reality was, however, that in many parts of the United States one particular group, African Americans, were systematically denied citizenship rights by legal instruments that nominally avoided the charge of racial discrimination while laws enforcing segregation and criminalizing miscegenation effectively denied them access both to public goods and private happiness. There is good reason, then, to believe that when Hitler referred to "certain races" he was thinking quite specifically about the situation of African Americans.

¹⁰ As Töppel points out, Hitler cannot have used the work of the American Madison Grant for "Volk und Rasse," because it was not published until 1925, but Grant's work could have informed the second volume of "Mein Kampf."

There is a growing awareness among historians (as there was among contemporaries) of the ways in which German racists, including National Socialist policymakers, looked to the United States for models of segregation and exclusion, a process ambivalently related to romantic visions of the frontier and the more concrete ways in which American social and agrarian experiments in the wake of abolition served as a model for German colonial modernity.¹¹ The American legal historian James Q. Whitman has most recently and comprehensively argued the case for “Hitler’s American model.”¹² He does this not least by painting a persuasive picture of early twentieth-century America as an aspirational “racial state” in its own right. Whitmore demonstrates how firmly embedded and widely accepted the actual exclusion of African Americans from civic life was as well as how pervasive eugenic and exclusionary arguments and practices had become in the management of the American polity since the turn of the century. In doing so, he points to the long history of genocide and second-class citizenship status experienced by Native Americans and the more recent denial of political rights for the native populations of territories won by the United States in colonial wars (Puerto Ricans and Filipinos) and Chinese immigrants. But he also adduces detailed evidence indicating an awareness of these policies and practices among German observers, including not only Hitler, but also several others who made crucial contributions to the drafting of Nazi racial legislation.

These influences are indeed apparent in the process of legislative consultation that led to the Nuremberg Laws. The importance of the American (and colonial) emphasis on skin color/phenotype in establishing racial categories is clear even in the approach of Wilhelm Frick, who later became chief framer and enforcer of the Nuremberg Laws. As Minister of the Interior in Thuringia in 1930, he had introduced a ban on Black performances, i.e. *Negerkultur*. Similarly, the committee led by Hans Kerrl, Prussian Minister of Justice that was charged with devising a penal code for the new National Socialist state proposed a number of measures in 1933 that banned not only miscegenation, but also “scandalously consorting in public” between people of German blood and members of “colored races.”¹³ In fact, their draft made direct reference to practices in the American South. A similar reference to the United States (rather than Germany’s own colo-

11 See Andrew Zimmerman, *Alabama in Africa. Booker T. Washington, the German Empire, and the Globalization of the New South*, Princeton/NJ 2010, and Guettel, *German Expansionism*, pp. 79–126.

12 See James Q. Whitman, *Hitler’s American Model. The United States and the Making of Nazi Race Law*, Princeton/NJ 2017.

13 *Nationalsozialistisches Strafrecht. Denkschrift des Preußischen Innenministers*, Berlin 1933, p. 48. Translation by Eve Rosenhaft.

nial history) was voiced by a Prussian Interior Ministry spokesman when suggesting a marriage ban in March 1934.¹⁴ In the immediate pre-Nuremberg discussions, Reich Justice Minister Franz Gürtner observed that it would be easier if all racial “aliens” could be identified on sight: “The idea of criminalizing race mixing as such would face far fewer difficulties if only it wasn’t the Jews who were de facto at the top of the list.”¹⁵

15 years ago, Alexandra Przyrembel provided a significant new analysis of these discussions, embedded within the context of a study of *Rassenschande*, i.e. the forms of “race mixing” and miscegenation criminalized by the Nuremberg Laws.¹⁶ On closer examination it seems clear that the central preoccupation of Nazi racial legislation and its framers was less the existence or presence of *Fremdblütige* as such, but rather the danger of “race mixing.” The fear of miscegenation informs all policy and practice towards *Fremdblütige* in Nazi Germany. We can see it in the way in which Frick positioned himself. As noted, the Nuremberg Laws explicitly targeted only Jews, and, as early as February 1935, Frick himself had declared that “the Jewish question” had priority among “questions of racial law and racial policy” when he claimed sole responsibility for the enforcement of the race laws.¹⁷ But, after the Nuremberg Laws were promulgated, he issued a statement naming Blacks and “Gypsies” as *Fremdblütige* within the terms of the Laws – and then it was specifically in terms of the danger that “mongrel” children might be born that he extended the ban on mixed marriages to those groups. This focus on reproductive power meant that sterilization would become a characteristic form of oppression and source of terror for both Blacks and “Gypsies.”

At the same time, though, the rationale for preventing or sanctioning miscegenation differed between target groups in ways that reflected those independent pre-histories of racism and discrimination. In the case of Blacks, the undesirability of racial mixing could be taken for granted against the background of Atlantic slavery and colonial histories, but the question had a particular valence for Germans: *visibly* mixed-race individuals were a living refutation of the notions of degeneration harbored by racists like Hitler. The children of colonial migrants

¹⁴ See “Schreiben des Preußischen Ministers des Innern an das Auswärtige Amt vom 28.3.1934,” in: Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts, Inland I Partei 84/4, reproduced in Reiner Pommerin, “Sterilisierung der Rheinlandbastarde.” Das Schicksal einer farbigen deutschen Minderheit 1918–1937, Düsseldorf 1979, pp. 96–101.

¹⁵ Cited by Alexandra Przyrembel, “Rassenschande.” Reinheitsmythos und Vernichtungslegitimation im Nationalsozialismus, Göttingen 2003, p. 142.

¹⁶ See *ibid.*

¹⁷ Gruchmann, “Blutschutzgesetz” und Justiz, p. 425; see also Günter Neliba, Wilhelm Frick. Der Legalist des Unrechtsstaates, Paderborn u. a. 1992, p. 164.

and French colonial occupying troops were also living reminders of a lost empire and a lost war. In the case of “Gypsies,” on the other hand, the theories of race hygienists such as Robert Ritter, adopted by SS-Leader Heinrich Himmler, rationalized long-standing prejudice by proposing that it was “mixed-” rather than “pure-blooded” “Gypsies” who had congenitally criminal tendencies.¹⁸ From this point of view, it is the scale of “racial” belonging established for Jews in the wake of the Nuremberg Laws – whereby higher proportions of “Jewish blood” incurred the most virulent sanctions while *Mischlinge* and those already in mixed marriages enjoyed some protection – that appears as an anomaly or at least as one of many policy inconsistencies rather than as a norm against which the cases of “other victims” could be judged as exceptions.

In short, the redrawing of the landscape of “race” in Nazi Germany by historians has not served to reconcile the contradictions and inconsistencies apparent in the system, still less to “domesticate” either Hitler or the antisemitic priorities that he and other leading Nazis shared. Often the elements of variation, improvisation, and catch-up that we see in relation to racial “other victims” serve to underline the fact that (in Gürtner’s terms) the Jews really were at the top of the list for Hitler. It was as a result of his direct intervention that the Nuremberg Laws explicitly targeted only Jews.¹⁹ And this brings us back to “Volk und Rasse” and Roman Töppel’s anatomy of Hitler’s early thought. As Töppel points out, even in “Volk und Rasse” the fear of miscegenation is central to Hitler’s intellectual tergiversations, leading, for example, to his insistence on the notion that insemination is a form of infection in the gendered division of procreative labor and that the Jewish youth was a sexual predator. Similarly, the assertion “it was and is the Jew who has brought the *Neger* to the Rhineland” has as its central point of reference not the (transient) presence of black occupying troops, but rather the lasting presence of their mixed-race children, who were among the first victims of systematic sterilization on “racial” grounds after 1933. This is not to deny that elements of sexual fantasy quite independent of questions of procreation were powering Hitler’s racism as they do all racist and colonial imaginaries.²⁰ But, a re-reading of both Töppel and Hitler suggests that a visceral fear of miscegenation *as such* begins to emerge as an originary force, surely not prior to a fear of the

¹⁸ Cited by Guenter Lewy, Himmler and the “Racially Pure Gypsies,” in: *Journal of Contemporary History* 34 (1999), pp. 201–14.

¹⁹ See Neliba, Wilhelm Frick, pp. 198–221; Gruchmann, “Blutschutzgesetz” und Justiz; Przyrembel, “Rassenschande,” p. 142.

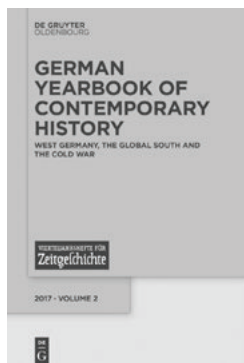
²⁰ On the multiple dimensions of the episode of the “Rheinlandbastarde,” see most recently Julia Roos, *Racist Hysteria to Pragmatic Rapprochement? The German Debate about Rhenish “Occupation Children,” 1920–30*, in: *Contemporary European History* 22 (2013), pp. 155–80.

Jews, but operating on its own terms in interaction with antisemitism. In terms of how we understand the sources of Hitler's ideas, then, his rejection of the science that demonstrated the positive consequences of hybridization really is key, especially since the Jewish threat (the antisemitic *Weltanschauung*) is not the sole QED, even in "Volk und Rasse." It remains a paradox that Hitler seems typical of his generation in his reception of a comprehensive, "unified" vision of "race" as a global issue yet also demonstratively different from most of his contemporaries in the absolute priority that he assigned to the "Jewish question." But pursuing the sources for his ideas in a wider sense does call for an exploration of the ways in which a *Weltanschauung* was formed under the political and material circumstances that defined a generation.²¹ While we cannot do without the kind of close reading and analysis of textual sources that Töppel has provided, we need to be aware of even more than the global context outlined above, the world of parallel text corpora and distinct and interweaving genealogies of discourse about "race," nation, territory, and empire. Harder to encompass, but absolutely crucial, is the texture of experience that constituted the historical moment of the early twentieth century in which anxieties about all of these things fused to generate a new and peculiarly toxic configuration of fears and hopes – one in which "race" turned out to be anything but an afterthought.

²¹ For recent approaches, see Michael Wildt, *An Uncompromising Generation. The Nazi Leadership of the Reich Security Main Office*, trans. Tom Lampert, Madison/WI 2009, and Mary Fulbrook, *Dissonant Lives. Generations and Violence through the German Dictatorships*, Oxford 2011.

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