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## Precedents.

**T**he German destruction of the European Jews was a tour de force; the Jewish collapse under the German assault was a manifestation of failure. Both of these phenomena were the final product of an earlier age.

Anti-Jewish policies and actions did not have their beginning in 1933. For many centuries, and in many countries, the Jews had been victims of destructive action. What was the object of these activities? What were the aims of those who persisted in anti-Jewish deeds? Throughout Western history, three consecutive policies have been applied against Jewry in its dispersion.

The first anti-Jewish policy started in the fourth century after Christ in Rome.<sup>1</sup> Early in the fourth century, during the reign of Constantine, the Christian Church gained power in Rome, and Christianity became the state religion. From this period, the state carried out Church policy. For the next twelve centuries, the Catholic Church prescribed the measures that were to be taken with respect to the Jews. Unlike the pre-Christian Romans, who claimed no monopoly on religion and faith, the Christian Church insisted on acceptance of Christian doctrine.

For an understanding of Christian policy toward Jewry, it is essential to realize that the Church pursued conversion not so much for the sake of aggrandizing its power (the Jews have always been few in number), but because of the conviction that it was the duty of true believers to save unbelievers from the doom of eternal hellfire. Zealousness in the pursuit of conversion was an indication of the depth of faith. The Christian religion was not one of many religions, but the

1. Pre-Christian Rome had no anti-Jewish policy. Rome had crushed the independent Jewish state of Judea, but the Jews *in* Rome enjoyed equality under the law. They could execute wills, enter into valid marriages with Romans, exercise the rights of guardianship, and hold office. Otto Stobbe, *Die Juden in Deutschland während des Mittelalters* (Leipzig, 1902), p. 2.

true religion, the only one. Those who were not in its fold were either ignorant or in error. The Jews could not accept Christianity.

In the very early stages of the Christian faith, many Jews regarded Christians as members of a Jewish sect. The first Christians, after all, still observed the Jewish law. They had merely added a few nonessential practices, such as baptism, to their religious life. But their view was changed abruptly when Christ was elevated to Godhood. The Jews have only one God. This God is indivisible. He is a jealous God and admits of no other gods. He is not Christ, and Christ is not He. Christianity and Judaism have since been irreconcilable. An acceptance of Christianity has since signified an abandonment of Judaism.

In antiquity and in the Middle Ages, Jews did not abandon Judaism lightly. With patience and persistence the Church attempted to convert obstinate Jewry, and for twelve hundred years the theological argument was fought without interruption. The Jews were not convinced. Gradually the Church began to back its words with force. The Papacy did not permit pressure to be put on individual Jews; Rome prohibited forceful conversions.<sup>2</sup> However, the clergy did use pressure on the whole. Step by step, but with ever widening effect, the Church adopted “defensive” measures against its passive victims. Christians were “protected” from the “harmful” consequences of intercourse with Jews by rigid laws against intermarriage, by prohibitions of discussions about religious issues, by laws against domicile in common abodes. The Church “protected” its Christians from the “harmful” Jewish teachings by burning the Talmud and by barring Jews from public office.<sup>3</sup>

These measures were precedent-making destructive activities. How little success the Church had in accomplishing its aim is revealed by the treatment of the few Jews who succumbed to the Christian religion. The clergy was not sure of its success—hence the widespread practice, in the Middle Ages, of identifying proselytes as former Jews;<sup>4</sup> hence the inquisition of new Christians suspected of heresy;<sup>5</sup> hence the issuance in Spain of certificates of “purity” (*limpieza*), signifying purely Christian ancestry, and the specification of “half-new Chris-

2. This prohibition had one weakness: once converted, even though forcibly, a Jew was forbidden to return to his faith. Guido Kisch, *The Jews in Medieval Germany* (Chicago, 1949), pp. 201–2.

3. Actually, non-Jews who wished to become Jews faced formidable obstacles. See Louis Finkelstein, “The Jewish Religion: Its Beliefs and Practices,” in Louis Finkelstein, ed., *The Jews: Their History, Culture, and Religion* (New York, 1949), vol. 2, p. 1376.

4. Kisch, *Jews in Medieval Germany*, p. 315.

5. *Ibid.*

tians,” “quarter-new Christians,” “one-eighth-new Christians,” and so on.<sup>6</sup>

The failure of conversion had far-reaching consequences. The unsuccessful Church began to look on the Jews as a special group of people, different from Christians, deaf to Christianity, and dangerous to the Christian faith. In 1542 Martin Luther, the founder of Protestantism, wrote the following lines:

And if there were a spark of common sense and understanding in them, they would truly have to think like this: O my God, it does not stand and go well with us; our misery is too great, too long, too hard; God has forgotten us, etc. I am no Jew, but I do not like to think in earnest about such brutal wrath of God against this people, for I am terrified at the thought that cuts through my body and soul: What is going to happen with the eternal wrath in hell against all false Christians and unbelievers?

In short, if *he* were a Jew, he would have accepted Christianity long ago.

A people cannot suffer for fifteen hundred years and still think of itself as the chosen people. But this people was blind. It had been stricken by the wrath of God. He had struck them “with frenzy, blindness, and raging heart, with the eternal fire, of which the Prophets say: The wrath of God will hurl itself outward like a fire that no one can smother.”<sup>8</sup>

The Lutheran manuscript was published at a time of increasing hatred for the Jew. Too much had been invested in twelve hundred years of conversion policy. Too little had been gained. From the thirteenth to the sixteenth century, the Jews of England, France, Germany, Spain, Bohemia, and Italy were presented with ultimatums that gave them no choice but one: conversion or expulsion.

6. Cecil Roth, “Marranos and Racial Anti-Semitism—A Study in Parallels,” *Jewish Social Studies* 2 (1940): 239–48. New Christian doctors were accused of killing patients, a Toledo tribunal handed down a decision in 1449 to the effect that new Christians were ineligible for public office, and in 1604 new Christians were barred from the University of Coimbra (*ibid.*). Anyone who was a descendant of Jews or Moors was also ineligible to serve in the “Militia of Christ,” Torquemada’s army, which tortured and burned “heretics.” Franz Helbing, *Die Tortur—Geschichte der Folter im Kriminalverfahren aller Völker und Zeiten* (Berlin, 1902), p. 118.

7. Martin Luther, *Von den Jueden und Jren Luegen* (Wittenberg, 1543), p. Aiii. Page numbers in the original edition of Luther’s book are placed on the bottom of every second or fourth page, as follows: A, Aii, Aiii, B, Bii, Biii, to Z, Zii, Ziii, starting over with a, aii, aiii.

8. Luther, *Von den Jueden*, p. diii. The reference to frenzy is an inversion. Frenzy is one of the punishments for deserting the one and only God.

Expulsion is the second anti-Jewish policy in history. In its origin, this policy presented itself only as an alternative—moreover, as an alternative that was left to the Jews. But long after the separation of church and state, long after the state had ceased to carry out church policy, expulsion and exclusion remained the goal of anti-Jewish activity.

The anti-Semites of the nineteenth century, who divorced themselves from religious aims, espoused the emigration of the Jews. The anti-Semites hated the Jews with a feeling of righteousness and reason, as though they had acquired the antagonism of the church like speculators buying the rights of a bankrupt corporation. With this hatred, the post-ecclesiastic enemies of Jewry also took the idea that the Jews could not be changed, that they could not be converted, that they could not be assimilated, that they were a finished product, inflexible in their ways, set in their notions, fixed in their beliefs.

The expulsion and exclusion policy was adopted by the Nazis and remained the goal of all anti-Jewish activity until 1941. That year marks a turning point in anti-Jewish history. In 1941 the Nazis found themselves in the midst of a total war. Several million Jews were incarcerated in ghettos. Emigration was impossible. A last-minute project to ship the Jews to the African island of Madagascar had fallen through. The “Jewish problem” had to be “solved” in some other way. At this crucial time, the idea of a “territorial solution” emerged in Nazi minds. The “territorial solution,” or “the final solution of the Jewish question in Europe,” as it became known, envisaged the death of European Jewry. The European Jews were to be killed. This was the third anti-Jewish policy in history.

To summarize: Since the fourth century after Christ there have been three anti-Jewish policies: conversion, expulsion, and annihilation. The second appeared as an alternative to the first, and the third emerged as an alternative to the second.

The destruction of the European Jews between 1933 and 1945 appears to us now as an unprecedented event in history. Indeed, in its dimensions and total configuration, nothing like it had ever happened before. As a result of an organized undertaking, five million people were killed in the short space of a few years. The operation was over before anyone could grasp its enormity, let alone its implications for the future.

Yet, if we analyze this singularly massive upheaval, we discover that most of what happened in those twelve years had already happened before. The Nazi destruction process did not come out of a void;

it was the culmination of a cyclical trend.<sup>9</sup> We have observed the trend in the three successive goals of anti-Jewish administrators. The missionaries of Christianity had said in effect: You have no right to live among us as Jews. The secular rulers who followed had proclaimed: You have no right to live among us. The German Nazis at last decreed: You have no right to live.

These progressively more drastic goals brought in their wake a slow and steady growth of anti-Jewish action and anti-Jewish thinking. The process began with the attempt to drive the Jews into Christianity. The development was continued in order to force the victims into exile. It was finished when the Jews were driven to their deaths. The German Nazis, then, did not discard the past; they built upon it. They did not begin a development; they completed it. In the deep recesses of anti-Jewish history we shall find many of the administrative and psychological tools with which the Nazis implemented their destruction process. In the hollows of the past we shall also discover the roots of the characteristic Jewish response to an outside attack.

The significance of the historical precedents will most easily be understood in the administrative sphere. The destruction of the Jews was an administrative process, and the annihilation of Jewry required the implementation of systematic administrative measures in successive steps. There are not many ways in which a modern society can, in short order, kill a large number of people living in its midst. This is an efficiency problem of the greatest dimensions, one which poses uncounted difficulties and innumerable obstacles. Yet, in reviewing the documentary record of the destruction of the Jews, one is almost immediately impressed with the fact that the German administration knew what it was doing. With an unflinching sense of direction and with an uncanny pathfinding ability, the German bureaucracy found the shortest road to the final goal.

We know, of course, that the very nature of a task determines the form of its fulfillment. Where there is the will, there is also the way, and if the will is only strong enough, the way will be found. But what if there is no time to experiment? What if the task must be solved quickly and efficiently? A rat in a maze that has only one path to the goal learns to choose that path after many trials. Bureaucrats, too, are sometimes caught in a maze, but they cannot afford a trial run. There may be no time

9. A regular trend is unbroken (for instance, an increase of population); a cyclical trend is observed in some of the recurring phenomena. We may speak, for example, of a set of wars that become progressively more destructive, depressions that decline in severity, etc.

## PRECEDENTS

for hesitations and stoppages. This is why past performance is so important; this is why past experience is so essential. Necessity is said to be the mother of invention, but if precedents have already been formed, if a guide has already been constructed, invention is no longer a necessity. The German bureaucracy could draw upon such precedents and follow such a guide, for the German bureaucrats could dip into a vast reservoir of administrative experience, a reservoir that church and state had filled in fifteen hundred years of destructive activity.

In the course of its attempt to convert the Jews, the Catholic Church had taken many measures against the Jewish population. These measures were designed to "protect" the Christian community from Jewish teachings and, not incidentally, to weaken the Jews in their "obstinacy." It is characteristic that as soon as Christianity became the state religion of Rome, in the fourth century A.D., Jewish equality of citizenship was ended. "The Church and the Christian state, concilium decisions and imperial laws, henceforth worked hand in hand to persecute the Jews."<sup>10</sup> Table 1-1 compares the basic anti-Jewish measures of the Catholic Church and the modern counterparts enacted by the Nazi regime.<sup>11</sup>

No summation of the canonical law can be as revealing as a description of the Rome ghetto, maintained by the Papal State until the occupation of the city by the Royal Italian Army in 1870. A German journalist who visited the ghetto in its closing days published such a description in the *Neue Freie Presse*.<sup>12</sup> The ghetto consisted of a few damp, dark, and dirty streets, into which 4,700 human creatures had been packed tightly (*eingepfercht*).

To rent any house or business establishment outside of the ghetto boundaries, the Jews needed the permission of the Cardinal Vicar. Acquisition of real estate outside the ghetto was prohibited. Trade in industrial products or books was prohibited. Higher schooling was prohibited. The professions of lawyer, druggist, notary, painter, and architect were prohibited. A Jew could be a doctor, provided that he confined his practice to Jewish patients. No Jew could hold office. Jews were required to pay taxes like everyone else and, in addition, the following: (1) a yearly stipend for the upkeep of the Catholic officials who supervised the Ghetto Finance Administration and the Jewish

10. Stobbe, *Die Juden in Deutschland*, p. 2.

11. The list of Church measures is taken in its entirety from J. E. Scherer, *Die Rechtsverhältnisse der Juden in den deutsch-österreichischen Ländern* (Leipzig, 1901), pp. 39-49. Only the first date of each measure is listed in Table 1-1.

12. Carl Eduard Bauernschmid in *Neue Freie Presse*, May 17, 1870. Reprinted in *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums* (Leipzig), July 19, 1870, pp. 580-82.

## T A B L E 1-1

### CANONICAL AND NAZI ANTI-JEWISH MEASURES

<i>Canonical Law</i>	<i>Nazi Measure</i>
Prohibition of intermarriage and of sexual intercourse between Christians and Jews, Synod of Elvira, 306	Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honor, September 15, 1935 (RGB1 I, 1146.)
Jews and Christians not permitted to eat together, Synod of Elvira, 306	Jews barred from dining cars (Transport Minister to Interior Minister, December 30, 1939, Document NG-3995.)
Jews not allowed to hold public office, Synod of Clermont, 535	Law for the Re-establishment of the Professional Civil Service, April 7, 1933 (RGB1 I, 175.)
Jews not allowed to employ Christian servants or possess Christian slaves, 3d Synod of Orléans, 538	Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honor, September 15, 1935 (RGB1 I, 1146.)
Jews not permitted to show themselves in the streets during Passion Week, 3d Synod of Orléans, 538	Decree authorizing local authorities to bar Jews from the streets on certain days (i.e., Nazi holidays), December 3, 1938 (RGB1 I, 1676.)
Burning of the Talmud and other books, 12th Synod of Toledo, 681	Book burnings in Nazi Germany
Christians not permitted to patronize Jewish doctors, Trulanic Synod, 692	Decree of July 25, 1938 (RGB1 I, 969.)
Christians not permitted to live in Jewish homes, Synod of Narbonne, 1050	Directive by Göring providing for concentration of Jews in houses, December 28, 1938 (Bormann to Rosenberg, January 17, 1939, PS-69.)
Jews obliged to pay taxes for support of the Church to the same extent as Christians, Synod of Gerona, 1078	The "Sozialausgleichsabgabe" which provided that Jews pay a special income tax in lieu of donations for Party purposes imposed on Nazis, December 24, 1940 (RGB1 I, 1666.)
Prohibition of Sunday work, Synod of Szabolcs, 1092	
Jews not permitted to be plaintiffs, or witnesses against Christians in the Courts, 3d Lateran Council, 1179, Canon 26	Proposal by the Party Chancellery that Jews not be permitted to institute civil suits, September 9, 1942 (Bormann to Justice Ministry, September 9, 1942, NG-151.)
Jews not permitted to withhold inheritance from descendants who had accepted Christianity, 3d Lateran Council, 1179, Canon 26	Decree empowering the Justice Ministry to void wills offending the "sound judgment of the people," July 31, 1938 (RGB1 I, 937.)

**T A B L E 1-1**  
**CANONICAL AND NAZI ANTI-JEWISH MEASURES (Continued)**

<i>Canonical Law</i>	<i>Nazi Measure</i>
The marking of Jewish clothes with a badge, 4th Lateran Council, 1215, Canon 68 (Copied from the legislation by Caliph Omar II [634-644], who had decreed that Christians wear blue belts and Jews, yellow belts.)	Decree of September 1, 1941 (RGBI I, 547.)
Construction of new synagogues prohibited, Council of Oxford, 1222	Destruction of synagogues in entire Reich, November 10, 1938 (Heydrich to Göring, November 11, 1938, PS-3058.)
Christians not permitted to attend Jewish ceremonies, Synod of Vienna, 1267	Friendly relations with Jews prohibited, October 24, 1941 (Gestapo directive, L-15.)
Jews not permitted to dispute with simple Christian people about the tenets of the Catholic religion, Synod of Vienna, 1267	
Compulsory ghettos, Synod of Breslau, 1267	Order by Heydrich, September 21, 1939 (PS-3363.)
Christians not permitted to sell or rent real estate to Jews, Synod of Ofen, 1279	Decree providing for compulsory sale of Jewish real estate, December 3, 1938 (RGBI I, 1709.)
Adoption by a Christian of the Jewish religion or return by a baptized Jew to the Jewish religion defined as a heresy, Synod of Mainz, 1310	Adoption of the Jewish religion by a Christian places him in jeopardy of being treated as a Jew. (Decision by Oberlandesgericht Königsberg, 4th Zivilsenat, June 26, 1942.) ( <i>Die Judenfrage</i> [Vertrauliche Beilage], November 1, 1942, pp. 82-83.)
Sale or transfer of Church articles to Jews prohibited, Synod of Lavour, 1368	
Jews not permitted to act as agents in the conclusion of contracts, especially marriage contracts, between Christians, Council of Basel, 1434, Sessio XIX	Decree of July 6, 1938, providing for liquidation of Jewish real estate agencies, brokerage agencies, and marriage agencies catering to non-Jews (RGBI I, 823.)
Jews not permitted to obtain academic degrees, Council of Basel, 1434, Sessio XIX	Law against Overcrowding of German Schools and Universities, April 25, 1933 (RGBI I, 225.)

community organization; (2) a yearly sum of 5,250 lire to the Casa Pia for missionary work among Jews; (3) a yearly sum of 5,250 lire to the Cloister of the Converted for the same purpose. In turn, the Papal State expended a yearly sum of 1,500 lire for welfare work. But no state money was paid for education or the care of the sick.

The papal regime in the Rome ghetto gives us an idea of the cumulative effect of the canonical law. *This* was its total result. Moreover, the policy of the Church gave rise not only to ecclesiastical regulations; for more than a thousand years, the will of the Church was also enforced by the state. The decisions of the synods and councils became basic guides for state action. Every medieval state copied the canonical law and elaborated upon it. Thus there arose an "international medieval Jewry law," which continued to develop until the eighteenth century. The governmental refinements and elaborations of the clerical regime may briefly be noted in Table 1-2, which shows also the Nazi versions.

These are some of the precedents that were handed down to the Nazi bureaucratic machine. To be sure, not all the lessons of the past were still remembered in 1933; much had been obscured by the passage of time. This is particularly true of negative principles, such as the avoidance of riots and pogroms. In 1406 the state sought to make profits from mob violence in the Jewish quarter of Vienna. Christians suffered greater losses in this pogrom than Jews, because the Jewish pawnshops, which went up in smoke during the great ghetto fire, contained the possessions of the very people who were rioting in the streets.<sup>13</sup> This experience was all but forgotten when, in November 1938, Nazi mobs surged once more into Jewish shops. The principal losers now were German insurance companies, who had to pay German owners of the damaged buildings for the broken window glass. A historical lesson had to be learned all over again.

If some old discoveries had to be made anew, it must be stressed that many a new discovery had not even been fathomed of old. The administrative precedents created by church and state were in themselves incomplete. The destructive path charted in past centuries was an interrupted path. The anti-Jewish policies of conversion and expulsion could carry destructive operations only up to a point. These policies were not only goals; they were also limits before which the bureaucracy had to stop and beyond which it could not pass. Only the removal of these restraints could bring the development of destructive operations to its fullest potentiality. That is why the Nazi adminis-

13. Otto Stowasser, "Zur Geschichte der Wiener Geserah," *Vierteljahrsschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 16 (1922): 117.

T A B L E 1-2  
PRE-NAZI AND NAZI ANTI-JEWISH MEASURES

<i>Pre-Nazi State Development</i>	<i>Nazi Measure</i>
Per capita protection tax ( <i>der goldene Opferpfennig</i> ) imposed on Jews by King Ludwig the Bavarian, 1328–37 (Stobbe, <i>Die Juden in Deutschland</i> , p. 31)	
The property of Jews slain in a German city considered as public property, “because the Jews with their possessions belong to the Reich chamber,” provision in the 14th-century code <i>Regulae juris “Ad decus”</i> (Kisch, <i>Jews in Medieval Germany</i> , pp. 360–61, 560–61)	13th Ordinance to the Reich Citizenship Law providing that the property of a Jew be confiscated after his death, July 1, 1943 (RGBI I, 372)
Confiscation of Jewish claims against Christian debtors at the end of the 14th-century in Nuremberg. (Stobbe, <i>Die Juden in Deutschland</i> , p. 58)	11th Ordinance to the Reich Citizenship Law, November 25, 1941 (RGBI I, 722)
“Fines”: for example, the Regensburg fine for “killing Christian child,” 1421. ( <i>Ibid.</i> , pp. 77–79)	Decree for the “Atonement Payment” by the Jews, November 12, 1938 (RGBI I, 1579)
Marking of documents and personal papers identifying possessor or bearer as a Jew (Zosa Szajkowski, “Jewish Participation in the Sale of National Property during the French Revolution,” <i>Jewish Social Studies</i> , 1952, p. 291n)	Decree providing for identification cards, July 23, 1938 (RGBI I, 922)
Around 1800, the Jewish poet Ludwig Börne had to have his passport marked “Jud von Frankfurt” (Heinrich Graetz, <i>Volkstümliche Geschichte der Juden</i> [Berlin-Vienna, 1923], vol. 3, pp. 373–74)	Decree providing for marking of passports, October 5, 1938 (RGBI I, 1342)
Marking of houses, special shopping hours, and restrictions of movement, 17th century, Frankfurt ( <i>Ibid.</i> , pp. 387–88)	Marking of Jewish apartments. ( <i>Jüdisches Nachrichtenblatt</i> [Berlin], April 17, 1942) Decree providing for movement restrictions, September 1, 1941 (RGBI I, 547)
Compulsory Jewish names in 19th-century bureaucratic practice (Leo M. Friedman, “American Jewish Names,” <i>Historia Judaica</i> , October 1944, p. 154)	Decree of January 5, 1937 (RGBI I, 9) Decree of August 17, 1938 (RGBI I, 1044)

trators became improvisers and innovators; that is also why the German bureaucracy under Hitler did infinitely more damage in twelve years than the Catholic Church was capable of in twelve centuries.

The administrative precedents, however, are not the only historical determinants with which we are concerned. In a Western society, destructive activity is not just a technocratic phenomenon. The problems arising in a destruction process are not only administrative but also psychological. A Christian is commanded to choose good and to reject evil. The greater his destructive task, therefore, the more potent are the moral obstacles in his way. These obstacles must be removed; the internal conflict must somehow be resolved. One of the principal means through which the perpetrator attempts to clear his conscience is by clothing his victim in a mantle of evil, by portraying the victim as an object that must be destroyed.

In recorded history we find many such portraits. Invariably they are floating effusively like clouds through the centuries and over the continents. Whatever their origins or destinations, the function of these stereotypes is always the same. They are used as justification for destructive thinking; they are employed as excuses for destructive action.

The Nazis needed such a stereotype. They required just such an image of the Jew. It is therefore of no little significance that when Hitler came to power, the image was already there. The model was already fixed. When Hitler spoke about the Jew, he could speak to the Germans in familiar language. When he reviled his victim, he resurrected a medieval conception. When he shouted his fierce anti-Jewish attacks, he awakened his Germans as if from slumber to a long-forgotten challenge. How old, precisely, are these charges? Why did they have such an authoritative ring?

The picture of the Jew we encounter in Nazi propaganda and Nazi correspondence had been drawn several hundred years before. Martin Luther had already sketched the main outlines of that portrait, and the Nazis, in their time, had little to add to it. We shall look here at a few excerpts from Luther’s book *About the Jews and Their Lies*. In doing so, let it be stressed that Luther’s ideas were shared by others in his century, and that the mode of his expression was the style of his times. His work is cited here only because he was a towering figure in the development of German thought, and the writing of such a man is not to be forgotten in the unearthing of so crucial a conceptualization as this. Luther’s treatise about the Jews was addressed to the public directly, and, in that pouring recital, sentences descended upon the audience in a veritable cascade. Thus the passage:

Herewith you can readily see how they understand and obey the fifth commandment of God, namely, that they are thirsty bloodhounds and

murderers of all Christendom, with full intent, now for more than fourteen hundred years, and indeed they were often burned to death upon the accusation that they had poisoned water and wells, stolen children, and torn and hacked them apart, in order to cool their temper secretly with Christian blood.<sup>14</sup>

And:

Now see what a fine, thick, fat lie that is when they complain that they are held captive by us. It is more than fourteen hundred years since Jerusalem was destroyed, and at this time it is almost three hundred years since we Christians have been tortured and persecuted by the Jews all over the world (as pointed out above), so that we might well complain that they had now captured us and killed us—which is the open truth. Moreover, we do not know to this day which devil has brought them here into our country; we did not look for them in Jerusalem.<sup>15</sup>

Even now no one held them here, Luther continued. They might go whenever they wanted to. For they were a heavy burden, “like a plague, pestilence, pure misfortune in our country.” They had been driven from France, “an especially fine nest,” and the “dear Emperor Charles” drove them from Spain, “the best nest of all.” And this year they were expelled from the entire Bohemian crown, including Prague, “also a very fine nest”—likewise from Regensburg, Magdeburg, and other towns.<sup>16</sup>

Is this called captivity, if one is not welcome in land or house? Yes, they hold us Christians captive in our country. They let us work in the sweat of our noses, to earn money and property for them, while they sit behind the oven, lazy, let off gas, bake pears, eat, drink, live softly and well from our wealth. They have captured us and our goods through their accursed usury; mock us and spit on us, because we work and permit them to be lazy squires who own us and our realm; they are therefore our lords, we their servants with our own wealth, sweat, and work. Then they curse our Lord, to reward us and to thank us. Should not the devil laugh and dance, if he can have such paradise among us Christians, that he may devour through the Jews—his holy ones—that which is ours, and stuff our mouths and noses as reward, mocking and cursing God and man for good measure.

They could not have had in Jerusalem under David and Solomon such fine days on their own estate as they have now on ours—which they rob and steal daily. But still they complain that we hold them captive. Yes, we have and hold them in captivity, just as I have captured my calculus, my blood heaviness, and all other maladies.<sup>17</sup>

14. Luther, *Von den Jueden*, p. diiii.

15. *Ibid.*

16. *Ibid.*, pp. diiii, e.

17. *Ibid.*, p. e.

What have the Christians done, asks Luther, to deserve such a fate? “We do not call their women whores, do not curse them, do not steal and dismember their children, do not poison their water. We do not thirst after their blood.” It was not otherwise than Moses had said. God had struck them with frenzy, blindness, and raging heart.<sup>18</sup>

This is Luther’s picture of the Jews. First, they want to rule the world.<sup>19</sup> Second, they are archcriminals, killers of Christ and all Christendom.<sup>20</sup> Third, he refers to them as a “plague, pestilence, and pure misfortune.”<sup>21</sup> This Lutheran portrait of Jewish world rule, Jewish criminality, and the Jewish plague has often been repudiated. But, in spite of denial and exposure, the charges have survived. In four hundred years the picture has not changed.

In 1895 the Reichstag was discussing a measure, proposed by the anti-Semitic faction, for the exclusion of foreign Jews. The speaker, Ahlwardt, belonged to that faction. We reproduce here a few excerpts from his speech:<sup>22</sup>

It is quite clear that there is many a Jew among us of whom one cannot say anything bad. If one designates the whole of Jewry as harmful, one does so in the knowledge that the racial qualities of this people are such that in the long run they cannot harmonize with the racial qualities of the

18. *Ibid.*, p. eii.

19. Emperor Frederick II, excluding Jews from public office, stated in 1237: “Faithful to the duties of a Catholic prince, we exclude Jews from public office so they will not abuse official power for the oppression of Christians.” Kisch, *Jews in Medieval Germany*, p. 149.

20. The following is a passage from a fifteenth-century German lawbook, the municipal code of Salzwedel, par. 83.2: “Should a Jew assault a Christian or kill him, the Jew may not make any reply, he must suffer in silence what the law appoints, for he has no claim on Christendom and is God’s persecutor and a murderer of Christendom.” Kisch, *Jews in Medieval Germany*, p. 268. Kisch points out that earlier German lawbooks contained no such discrimination.

The poisoned wells legend (fourteenth century) and the ritual murders legend (thirteenth century) were both condemned by the Popes. Scherer, *Die Rechtsverhältnisse der Juden*, pp. 36–38. On the other hand, the thirteenth-century Castilian code “Las siete partidas,” *partida septima*, titulo XXIV (de los judíos), ley II, makes reference to the capital crime of crucifying Christian children or wax figures on Holy Friday. Antonio G. Solalinde, ed., *Antología de Alfonso X el Sabio* (Buenos Aires, 1946), p. 181. As for the legal view of usury, see Kisch, *Jews in Medieval Germany*, pp. 191–97.

21. The Fourth Lateran Council expressly called upon the secular powers to “exterminate (*exterminare*) all heretics. Kisch, *Jews in Medieval Germany*, p. 203. This provision was the basis for a wave of stake burnings during the inquisitions.

The story of the tenth plague, the slaying of the first-born, has given rise to the ritual murder legend, in accordance with which Jews kill Christian children at Passover time to use their blood in matzos. See also the provision in the *partida septima*, in which the tenth plague is combined with the Gospels to produce the crucifixion of children.

22. Reichstag, *Stenographische Berichte*, 53. Sitzung, March 6, 1895, p. 1296 ff. To

Germanic peoples, and that every Jew who at this moment has not done anything bad may nevertheless under the proper conditions do precisely that, because his racial qualities drive him to do it.

Gentlemen, in India there was a certain sect, the Thugs, who elevated the act of assassination to an act of policy. In this sect, no doubt, there were quite a few people who personally never committed a murder, but the English in my opinion have done the right thing when they exterminated [*ausrotteten*] this whole sect, without regard to the question whether any particular member of the sect already had committed a murder or not, for in the proper moment every member of the sect would do such a thing.

Ahlwardt pointed out that the anti-Semites were fighting the Jews not because of their religion but because of their race. He then continued:

The Jews accomplished what no other enemy has accomplished: they have driven the people from Frankfurt into the suburbs. And that's the way it is wherever Jews congregate in large numbers. Gentlemen, the Jews are indeed beasts of prey. . . .

Mr. Rickert [another deputy who had opposed the exclusion of the Jews] started by saying that we already had too many laws, and that's why we should not concern ourselves with a new anti-Jewish code. That is really the most interesting reason that has ever been advanced against anti-Semitism. We should leave the Jews alone because we have too many laws?! Well, I think, if we would do away with the Jews [*die Juden abschaffen*], we could do away with half the laws that we have now on the books.

Then, Deputy Rickert said that it is really a shame—whether he actually said that I don't know because I could not take notes—but the sense of it was that it was a shame that a nation of 50 million people should be afraid of a few Jews. [Rickert had cited statistics to prove that the number of Jews in the country was not excessive.] Yes, gentlemen, Deputy Rickert would be right, if it were a matter of fighting with honest weapons against an honest enemy; then it would be a matter of course that the Germans would not fear a handful of such people. But the Jews, who operate like parasites, are a different kind of problem. Mr. Rickert, who is not as tall as I am, is afraid of a single cholera germ—and, gentlemen, the Jews are cholera germs.

(Laughter)

Gentlemen, it is the infectiousness and exploitative power of Jewry that is involved.

Ahlwardt then called upon the deputies to wipe out “these beasts of prey [*Rotten Sie diese Raubtiere aus*]”, and continued:

If it is now pointed out—and that was undoubtedly the main point of the two previous speakers—that the Jew is human too, then I must reject

Paul Massing belongs the credit for discovering this speech and including it in his book *Rehearsal for Destruction* (New York, 1949).

that totally. The Jew is no German. If you say that the Jew is born in Germany, is raised by German nurses, has obeyed the German laws, has had to become a soldier—and what kind of soldier, we don't want to talk about that—

(Laughter in the right section)

has fulfilled all his duties, has had to pay taxes, too, then all of that is not decisive for nationality, but only the race out of which he was born [*aus der er herausgeboren ist*] is decisive. Permit me to use a banal analogy, which I have already brought out in previous speeches: a horse that is born in a cowbarn is still no cow. (Stormy laughter) A Jew who is born in Germany, is still no German; he is still a Jew.

Ahlwardt then remarked that this was no laughing matter but deadly serious business.

It is necessary to look at the matter from this angle. We do not even think of going so far as, for instance, the Austrian anti-Semites in the Reichsrath, that we demand an appropriation to reward everybody who shoots a Jew [*dass wir ein Schussgeld für die Juden beantragen wollten*], or that we should decide that whoever kills a Jew, inherits his property. (Laughter, uneasiness) That kind of thing we do not intend here; that far we do not want to go. But we do want a quiet and common-sense separation of the Jews from the Germans. And to do that, it is first of all necessary that we close that hatch, so that more of them cannot come in.

It is remarkable that two men, separated by a span of 350 years, can still speak the same language. Ahlwardt's picture of the Jews is in its basic features a replica of the Lutheran portrait. The Jew is still (1) an enemy who has accomplished what no external enemy has accomplished: he has driven the people of Frankfurt into the suburbs; (2) a criminal, a thug, a beast of prey, who commits so many crimes that his elimination would enable the Reichstag to cut the criminal code in half; and (3) a plague or, more precisely, a cholera germ. Under the Nazi regime, these conceptions of the Jew were expounded and repeated in an almost endless flow of speeches, posters; letters, and memoranda. Hitler himself preferred to look upon the Jew as an enemy, a menace, a dangerous cunning foe. This is what he said in a speech delivered in 1940, as he reviewed his “struggle for power”:

It was a battle against a satanical power, which had taken possession of our entire people, which had grasped in its hands all key positions of scientific, intellectual, as well as political and economic life, and which kept watch over the entire nation from the vantage of these key positions. It was a battle against a power which, at the same time, had the influence to combat with the law every man who attempted to take up battle against them and every man who was ready to offer resistance to the spread of this power. At that time, all-powerful Jewry declared war on us.<sup>23</sup>

23. Speech by Hitler, German press, November 10–11, 1940.



Gauleiter Julius Streicher emphasized the contention that the Jews were criminal. The following is an excerpt from a typical Streicher speech to the Hitler Youth. It was made in 1935.

Boys and girls, look back to a little more than ten years ago. A war—the World War—had whirled over the peoples of the earth and had left in the end a heap of ruins. Only one people remained victorious in this dreadful war, a people of whom Christ said its father is the devil. That people had ruined the German nation in body and soul.

But then Hitler arose and the world took courage in the thought that now

the human race might be free again from this people which has wandered about the world for centuries and millennia, marked with the sign of Cain.

Boys and girls, even if they say that the Jews were once the chosen people, do not believe it, but believe us when we say that the Jews are not a chosen people. Because it cannot be that a chosen people should act among the peoples as the Jews do today.

A chosen people does not go into the world to make others work for them, to suck blood. It does not go among the peoples to chase the peasants from the land. It does not go among the peoples to make your fathers poor and drive them to despair. A chosen people does not slay and torture animals to death. A chosen people does not live by the sweat of others. A chosen people joins the ranks of those who live because they work. Don't you ever forget that.

Boys and girls, for you we went to prison. For you we have always suffered. For you we had to accept mockery and insult, and became fighters against the Jewish people, against that organized body of world criminals, against whom already Christ had fought, the greatest anti-Semite of all times.<sup>24</sup>

A number of Nazis, including the chief of the German SS and Police Himmler, the jurist and Generalgouverneur of Poland Hans Frank, and Justice Minister Thierack, inclined to the view that the Jews were a lower species of life, a kind of vermin, which upon contact infected the German people with deadly diseases. Himmler once cautioned his SS generals not to tolerate the stealing of property that had belonged to dead Jews. "Just because we exterminated a bacterium," he said, "we do not want, in the end, to be infected by that bacterium and die of it."<sup>25</sup> Frank frequently referred to the Jews as "lice." When the Jews in his Polish domain were killed, he announced that now a sick Europe would become healthy again.<sup>26</sup> Justice Minister Thierack once wrote the following letter to a worried Hitler:

24. Speech by Streicher, June 22, 1935, M-1.

25. Speech by Himmler, October 4, 1943, PS-1919.

26. Generalgouvernement Health Conference, July 9, 1943, Frank Diary, PS-2233. Remarks by Frank recorded verbatim.

A full Jewess, after the birth of her child, sold her mother's milk to a woman doctor, and concealed the fact that she was a Jewess. With this milk, infants of German blood were fed in a children's clinic. The accused is charged with fraud. The purchasers of the milk have suffered damage, because the mother's milk of a Jewess cannot be considered food for German children. The impudent conduct of the accused is also an insult. However, there has been no formal indictment in order to spare the parents—who do not know the facts—unnecessary worry. I will discuss the race-hygienic aspects of the case with the Reich Health Chief.<sup>27</sup>

The twentieth-century Nazis, like the nineteenth-century anti-Semites and the sixteenth-century clerics, regarded the Jews as hostile, criminal, and parasitic. Ultimately the very word *Jew* (*Jude*) was infused with all these meanings.<sup>28</sup> But there is also a difference between the recent writings and the older scripts that requires explanation. In the Nazi and anti-Semitic speeches we discover references to race. This formulation does not appear in the sixteenth-century books. Conversely, in Luther's work there is repeated mention of God's scorn, thunder and lightning worse than Sodom and Gomorrah, frenzy, blindness, and raging heart. Such language disappeared in the nineteenth century.

There is, however, a close functional relationship between Luther's references to divine blows and Ahlwardt's reliance upon race characteristics, for both Luther and Ahlwardt tried to show that the Jew could not be changed, that a Jew remained a Jew. "What God does not improve with such terrible blows, that we shall not change with words and deeds."<sup>29</sup> There was some evil in the Jew that even the fires of God, burning high and hot, could not extinguish. In Ahlwardt's time these evil qualities, fixed and unchangeable, are traced to a definite cause. The Jew "cannot help himself" because his racial qualities drive him to commit antisocial acts. We can see, therefore, that even the race idea fits into a trend of thought.

Anti-Jewish racism had its beginning in the second half of the seventeenth century, when the "Jewish caricature" first appeared in cartoons.<sup>30</sup> These caricatures were the first attempt to discover racial characteristics in the Jew. However, racism acquired a "theoretical"

27. Thierack to Hitler, April 1943, NG-1656. The expert in charge of the case was Ministerialrat Dr. Malzan.

28. See entry under *Jude* in Deutsche Akademie, *Trübners Deutsches Wörterbuch*, Alfred Götze, ed. (Berlin, 1943), Vol. 4, pp. 55–57. Stereotypes are often unoriginal and they are easily attributed to a variety of nations. Note, for example, the rumor during the First World War that the Germans crucified a Canadian soldier. Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (New York, 1975), p. 117.

29. Luther, *Von den Jueden*, p. Aiii.

30. Eduard Fuchs, *Die Juden in der Karikatur* (Munich, 1921), pp. 160–61.

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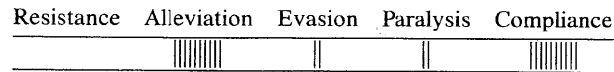
29. Luther, *Von den Jueden*, p. Aiii.

30. Eduard Fuchs, *Die Juden in der Karikatur* (Munich, 1921), pp. 160–61.

basis only in the 1800s. The racists of the nineteenth century stated explicitly that cultural characteristics, good or bad, were the product of physical characteristics. Physical attributes did not change; hence social behavior patterns also had to be immutable. In the eyes of the anti-Semite, the Jews therefore became a "race."<sup>31</sup>

The destruction of European Jewry was fundamentally the work of German perpetrators, and hence it is to them that we must devote our primary attention. What happened to the Jews cannot be understood without insight into decisions made by German officials in Berlin and in the field. Yet, every day German exertions and costs were being affected by the behavior of the victims. To the extent that an agency could marshal only limited resources for a particular task, the very progress of the operation and its ultimate success depended on the mode of the Jewish response.

The Jewish posture in the face of destruction was not shaped on the spur of the moment. The Jews of Europe had been confronted by force many times in their history, and during these encounters they had evolved a set of reactions that were to remain remarkably constant over the centuries. This pattern may be portrayed by the following diagram:



Preventive attack, armed resistance, and revenge were almost completely absent in Jewish exilic history. The last, and only, major revolt took place in the Roman Empire at the beginning of the second century, when the Jews were still living in compact settlements in the eastern Mediterranean region and when they were still envisaging an independent Judea.<sup>32</sup> During the Middle Ages the Jewish communities no longer contemplated battle. The medieval Hebrew poets did not celebrate the martial arts.<sup>33</sup> The Jews of Europe were placing themselves under the protection of constituted authority. This reliance was legal, physical, and psychological.

31. For a Nazi discussion of race, including such formulations as "racial substance" (*Rassekern*), "superior race" (*Hochrasse*), and "racial decline" (*Rasseverfall*), see Konrad Dürre, "Werden und Bedeutung der Rassen," *Die Neue Propyläen-Weltgeschichte* (Berlin, 1940), pp. 89-118.

32. The rebellion, in A.D. 115-17 under Trajan (following the Roman destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70 and preceding the rising of Bar Kochba in A.D. 132-135), had broken out in Cyrenaica, Egypt, and Cyprus, and its ferment was spreading to Mesopotamia and Judea itself. The direction and convergence of Jewish forces indicate that the goal was Jerusalem. See Shimon Applebaum, *Jews and Greeks in Ancient Cyrene* (Leiden, 1979), pp. 201-334 and particularly pp. 336-37.

33. See David Segal, "Observations on Three War Poems of Shmuel Ha-Nagid," *AJSReview* 4 (1979): 165-203. Ha-Nagid was the only medieval Hebrew war poet.

The psychological dependence of European Jews is illustrated by the following incident. In 1096, when the Jewish communities of Germany were warned by letters and emissaries from France that the crusaders were coming to kill them, the Jewish leadership of Mainz replied: "We are greatly concerned with your well-being. As for ourselves, there is no great cause for fear. We have not heard a word of such matters, nor has it been hinted that our lives are threatened by the sword." Soon the crusaders came, "battalion after battalion," and struck at the Jews of Speyer, Worms, Mainz, and other German cities.<sup>34</sup> More than eight hundred years later, a president of the Jewish council in Holland was to say: "The fact that the Germans had perpetrated atrocities against Polish Jews was no reason for thinking that they behave [sic] in the same way toward Dutch Jews, firstly because the Germans had always held Polish Jews in disrepute, and secondly because in the Netherlands, unlike Poland, they had to sit up and take notice of public opinion."<sup>35</sup> In the Netherlands, as in Poland to the east, Jewry was subjected to annihilation.

For the Diaspora Jews, acts of armed opposition had become isolated and episodic. Force was not to be a Jewish strategy again until Jewish life was reconstituted in a Jewish state. During the catastrophe of 1933-45 the instances of opposition were small and few. Above all, they were, whenever and wherever they occurred, actions of last (never first) resort.<sup>36</sup>

On the other hand, alleviation attempts were typical and instantaneous responses by the Jewish community. Under the heading of alleviation are included petitions, protection payments, ransom arrangements, anticipatory compliance, relief, rescue, salvage, reconstruction—in short, all those activities designed to avert danger or, in the event that force has already been used, to diminish its effects. Let us give a few illustrations.

34. Mainz Anonymous Hebrew Chronicle (text of a contemporary account), in Shlomo Eidelberg, ed. and trans., *The Jews and the Crusaders* (Madison, Wis. 1977), pp. 99-100.

35. Testimony of D. Cohen, November 12, 1947, cited by Louis de Jong, "The Netherlands and Auschwitz," *Yad Vashem Studies* 7 (1968): 44.

36. From 1789 Jews had gained military experience in the armies of continental Europe. In 1794 and 1831 they had fought in their own detachments on the side of Polish forces in Warsaw. During 1903-4 Jewish self-defense units, armed with clubs, confronted drunken mobs invading the Jewish quarters of several Russian cities. Yet these experiences, often cited in literature, were limited precedents. The Jewish soldiers of the German or Austrian armies did not wear a Jewish uniform. The Jewish detachments in Warsaw fought as residents of Poland for a Polish cause. The self-defense units in Russia did not challenge the Russian state. Even so, it is noteworthy that the death camp revolts in Treblinka and Sobibór were planned by Jewish inmates who had been officers, that the principal ghetto rising took place in Warsaw, and that Jewish partisan activity was concentrated in parts of the occupied USSR.

The ancient city of Alexandria, Egypt, was divided into five districts:  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ,  $\gamma$ ,  $\delta$ , and  $\epsilon$ . The Jews were heavily concentrated in the Delta (waterfront section), but they had residences also in other parts of town. In A.D. 38, Emperor Caligula wanted to be worshipped as a half-god. The Jews refused to pay him the desired respect. Thereupon, riots broke out in Alexandria. The Jews were driven into the Delta, and the mob took over abandoned apartments. Equality of rights was temporarily abolished, the food supply to the Delta was cut off, and all exits were sealed. From time to time, a centurion of Roman cavalry would enter Jewish homes on the pretext of searching for arms. Under these conditions, which have a peculiarly modern flavor, the Jews sent a delegation to Rome to petition Emperor Caligula for relief. The delegation included the famous philosopher Philo, who disputed about the matter in Rome with the anti-Jewish public figure Apion.<sup>37</sup> This is one of the earliest examples of Jewish petition diplomacy. More than nineteen hundred years later, in 1942, a delegation of Bulgarian Jews petitioned for a similar purpose: the Jews were attempting to ward off ejection from their homes.<sup>38</sup>

Sometimes the Jews attempted to buy protection with money. In 1384, when much Jewish blood was flowing in Franken, the Jews sought to ransom themselves. Arrangements for payment were made with speed. The city of Nuremberg collected the enormous sum of 80,000 guilders. King Wenzel got his share of 15,000 guilders from that amount. The representatives of the king, who participated in negotiations with other cities, received 4,000 guilders. Net profit to the city: over 60,000 guilders, or 190,000 thaler.<sup>39</sup> The Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe, from the Netherlands to the Caucasus, made identical attempts to buy safety from death with money and valuables.

One of the most sagacious alleviation reactions in the Jewish arsenal was anticipatory compliance. The victim, sensing danger, combated it by initiating a conciliatory response *before* being confronted by open threats. He therefore gave in to a demand on his own terms. An example of such a maneuver was the effort of European Jewish communities before 1933 to bring about a significant shift in the Jewish occupational structure from commerce and law to engineering, skilled

37. Heinrich Graetz, *Volkstümliche Geschichte der Juden*, (Berlin and Vienna, 1923), vol. 3. pp. 600–69. Victor Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews* (JPS and Hebrew University, 1959), pp. 313–16. Excerpts from Philo's description from a letter of Emperor Claudius (A.D. 41) in Naphtali Lewis, *The Roman Principate—27 B.C.—285 A.D.* (Toronto, 1974), pp. 111–13. Claudius refers to the separate Jewish mission as "something never done before."

38. Frederick Chary, *The Bulgarian Jews and the Final Solution, 1940–1944* (Pittsburgh, 1972) pp. 73–74, 92–96, 144–52.

39. Stobbe, *Die Juden in Deutschland*, pp. 57–58.

labor, and agricultural work. This movement, which in Germany was known as *Berufsumschichtung* (occupational redistribution), was prompted by a hope that in their new economic role the Jews were going to be less conspicuous, less vulnerable, and less subject to the criticism of unproductiveness.<sup>40</sup> Another illustration of anticipation is the self-restraint by Jewish firms of pre-1933 Germany in the hiring of Jewish personnel. Jewish enterprises had already become the employers of most Jewish wage earners, but now some companies instituted quotas to avoid an even greater manifestation of such Jewishness.<sup>41</sup> Several years later, in Nazi-dominated Europe, Jewish councils spent many hours trying to anticipate German requirements and orders. The Germans, they reasoned, would not be concerned about the impact of a particular economic measure on those Jews who were least capable of shouldering another burden, whereas the councils might at least try to protect the weakest and neediest Jews from harmful effects. In this vein, the Jewish Council of Warsaw considered confiscating Jewish belongings wanted by the Germans,<sup>42</sup> and for the same reason the council devised a system for drafting Jewish labor, with provisions exempting well-to-do Jews for a fee in order that the money might be used to make payments to families of poorer Jews who were working without wages for German agencies.<sup>43</sup>

The alleviations that followed disaster were developed to a very high degree in the Jewish community. Relief, rescue, and salvage were old Jewish institutions. The relief committees and subcommittees formed by "prominent" Jews (the *Prominente*), which are so typical of the United Jewish Appeal machinery today, were commonplace in the nineteenth century. Already during the 1860s, collections for Russian Jews were conducted in Germany on a fairly large scale.<sup>44</sup> Reconstruction—that is to say, the rebuilding of Jewish life, whether in new sur-

40. In two letters addressed to Adolf Hitler on April 4 and May 6, 1933, a conservative organization of Jewish war veterans (*Reichsbund jüdischer Frontsoldaten*) pointed out that it had long espoused a *Berufsumschichtung* from "intellectual" pursuits to agriculture and the artisan trades. Texts in Klaus Herrmann, *Das Dritte Reich und die deutsch-jüdischen Organisationen, 1933–1934* (Cologne, 1969), pp. 66–67, 94–98.

41. Esra Bennathan, "Die demographische und wirtschaftliche Struktur der Juden," in Werner Mosse, ed., *Entscheidungsjahr 1932* (Tübingen, 1966), pp. 88–131, at pp. 110, 114.

42. Raul Hilberg, Stanislaw Staron, and Josef Kermisz, eds., *The Warsaw Diary of Adam Czerniakow* (New York, 1979), p. 99.

43. See Czerniakow's diary, entries for October 13–24, 1939; November 2 and 13, 1939; December 9, 1939; and January 21 and 23, 1940, *ibid.*, pp. 81–110, *passim*; Czerniakow to Plenipotentiary of the District Chief for the City of Warsaw, May 21, 1940, *ibid.*, pp. 386–87.

44. See, for example, list of contributions in *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums* (Leipzig), November 2, 1869, p. 897 ff.

roundings or, after abatement of persecution, in the old home—has been a matter of automatic adjustment for hundreds of years. Reconstruction is identical with the continuity of Jewish life. The bulk of any general Jewish-history book is devoted to the story of the constant shifts, the recurring readjustments, the endless rebuilding of the Jewish community. The years after 1945 were marked by one of the largest of these reconstructive efforts.

Next in our scale is the reaction of evasion, of flight. In the diagram the evasive reaction is not marked as strongly as the alleviation attempts. By this we do not mean the absence of flight, concealment, and hiding in the Jewish response pattern. We mean, rather, that the Jews have placed less hope, less expectation, and less reliance on these devices. It is true that the Jews have always wandered from country to country, but they have rarely done so because the restrictions of a regime became too burdensome. Jews have migrated chiefly for two reasons: expulsion and economic depression. Jews have rarely run from a pogrom. They have lived through it. The Jewish tendency has been not to run from but to survive with anti-Jewish regimes. It is a fact, now confirmed by many documents, that the Jews made an attempt to live with Hitler. In many cases they failed to escape while there was still time and more often still, they failed to step out of the way when the killers were already upon them.

There are moments of impending disaster when almost any conceivable action will only make suffering worse or bring final agonies closer. In such situations the victims may lapse into paralysis. The reaction is barely overt, but in 1941 a German observer noted the symptomatic fidgeting of the Jewish community in Galicia as it awaited death, between shocks of killing operations, in "nervous despair" (*verzweifelte Nervosität*).<sup>45</sup> Among Jews outside the destruction arena, a passive stance manifested itself as well. In 1941 and 1942, just when mass killings began, Jews all over the world looked on helplessly as Jewish populations of cities and entire countries vanished.

The last reaction on the scale is compliance. To the Jews compliance with anti-Jewish laws or orders has always been equivalent to survival. The restrictions were petitioned against and sometimes evaded, but when these attempts were unsuccessful, automatic compliance was the normal course of action. Compliance was carried to the greatest lengths and to the most drastic situations. In Frankfurt, on September 1, 1614, a mob under the leadership of a certain Vincenz Fettmilch attacked the Jewish quarter in order to kill and plunder.

45. Oberfeldkommandantur 365 to Militärbefehlshaber im Generalgouvernement, December 18, 1941, T 501, roll 214.

Many Jews fled to the cemetery. There they huddled together and prayed, dressed in the ritual shrouds of the dead and waiting for the killers.<sup>46</sup> This example is particularly pertinent, because the voluntary assembly at graves was repeated many times during the Nazi killing operations of 1941.

The Jewish reactions to force have always been alleviation and compliance. We shall note the reemergence of this pattern time and again. However, before we pass on, it should be emphasized again that the term "Jewish reactions" refers only to ghetto Jews. This reaction pattern was born in the ghetto and it will die there. It is part and parcel of ghetto life. It applies to *all* ghetto Jews—assimilationists and Zionists, the capitalists and the socialists, the unorthodox and the religious.

One other point has to be understood. The alleviation-compliance response dates, as we have seen, to pre-Christian times. It has its beginnings with the Jewish philosophers and historians Philo and Josephus, who bargained on behalf of Jewry with the Romans and who cautioned the Jews not to attack, in word or deed, any other people. The Jewish reaction pattern assured the survival of Jewry during the Church's massive conversion drive. The Jewish policy once more assured to the embattled community a foothold and a chance for survival during the periods of expulsion and exclusion.

If, therefore, the Jews have always played along with an attacker, they have done so with deliberation and calculation, in the knowledge that their policy would result in least damage and least injury. The Jews knew that measures of destruction were self-financing or even profitable up to a certain point but that beyond that limit they could be costly. As one historian put it: "One does not kill the cow one wants to milk."<sup>47</sup> In the Middle Ages the Jews carried out vital economic functions. Precisely in the usury so much complained of by Luther and his contemporaries, there was an important catalyst for the development of a more complex economic system. In modern times, too, Jews have pioneered in trade, in the professions, and in the arts. Among some Jews the conviction grew that Jewry was "indispensable."

46. Graetz, *Volkstümliche Geschichte der Juden*, vol. 3, pp. 388–89. The mob permitted them to flee. The Jews returned to their homes two months later, under imperial protection. Fettmilch was torn to pieces by four horses upon orders of the authorities—the Emperor did not like pogroms. In Erfurt, during the fourteenth century, a mob was permitted by the city council to kill one hundred Jews. When the crowds began to threaten the remaining three thousand Jews, the victims fled to their apartments, blocked the entrances, and then set fire to their own homes, burning themselves to death in the holocaust. Ludwig Count Ütterodt, *Gunther Graf von Schwarzenburg—Erwählter Deutscher König* (Leipzig, 1862), p. 33n.

47. Stowasser, "Zur Geschichte der Wiener Geserah," *Vierteljahrsschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 16 (1922): 106.

## PRECEDENTS

In the early 1920s Hugo Bettauer wrote a fantasy novel entitled *Die Stadt ohne Juden* (*The City without Jews*).<sup>48</sup> This highly significant novel, published only eleven years before Hitler came to power, depicts an expulsion of the Jews from Vienna. The author shows how Vienna cannot get along without its Jews. Ultimately, the Jews are recalled. That was the mentality of Jewry, and of Jewish leadership, on the eve of the destruction process. When the Nazis took over in 1933, the old Jewish reaction pattern set in again, but this time the results were catastrophic. The German bureaucracy was not slowed by Jewish pleading; it was not stopped by Jewish indispensability. Without regard to cost, the bureaucratic machine, operating with accelerating speed and ever-widening destructive effect, proceeded to annihilate the European Jews. The Jewish community, unable to switch to resistance, increased its cooperation with the tempo of the German measures, thus hastening its own destruction.

We see, therefore, that both perpetrators and victims drew upon their age-old experience in dealing with each other. The Germans did it with success. The Jews did it with disaster.

48. Hugo Bettauer, *Die Stadt ohne Juden—Ein Roman von übermorgen* (Vienna, 1922).