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The Ideological Flexibility of Nazi Propaganda:
A Case Study of The Nazi Primer

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by

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Abstract

This thesis is a case study of Nazi propaganda, which will lay out the debates in three different areas of ideological policies written about in the Nazi Youth Primer. As there is but one citation in the entire Primer, this thesis will analyze the academic debates in Nazi racial science, economics, and geopolitics to see which ideas are being included and excluded. The first area of analysis will layout the debate between the academia of eugenicists and racial scientist, arguing that the Primer uses language of eugenicists to support Party sterilization policies. The next section on economics will cross analyze the Primer with the debate between restoration economics and war economics, explaining that the Primer tried to garner support for the Four Year Plan by downplaying the racial elements of war economics and using the language of restoration economics. Finally, the last section on geopolitics breaks down the debates within Nazi demography and geography; the former includes a divide between eugenic and numeric population policies, while the latter details the divide between deterritorialization and reterritorialization. Again, I will argue that the editor of the Primer chose to exclude the racist language (in eugenic deomgraphics and deterritorializaation) in order to support population and geopolitical policies of the Nazi Party. This thesis will contribute to scholarship on the aim of Nazi propaganda, arguing that the in the Primer, the Nazi Party showed ideological flexibility by downplaying racist elements of their ideologies through a mask of nationalism in order to garner support of party policies.

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Introduction

The Hitler Youth

The Hitler Youth was started in 1921 by Adolf Lenk who wanted to join the NSDAP, but was turned down for being under 18. He with a dozen of his peers created the first version of “*Hitlerjugend*, The League of the NSDAP,” to nurture Aryan values.¹ This youth group was revamped in 1926 by Kurt Gruber, becoming the infamous Hitler Youth.² In 1933, Baldur von Schirach became Youth Leader of the German Reich, a position he would hold for the next seven years.³ The Hitler Youth was a National Socialist youth group for boys ages 14-18 who were indoctrinated with Nazi ideology and encouraged to learn skills for the military. Having only 107,956 members in 1933, with the ban of all other youth groups in 1936, the Hitler Youth proper grew its membership to 5.4 million.⁴ On March 25, 1939, membership in the Hitler Youth became compulsory.⁵

The Primer

The Nazi Primer: Official Handbook for Schooling the Hitler Youth was compiled by Fritz Brennecke in 1936 for the NSDAP. The original German title is “*Handbuch für die Schulungsarbeit in der HJ. Vom deutschen Volk und seinem Lebensraum*,” which roughly translates to “Manual for the training work in the HJ. Of the German people and their land.” The original copies were quite small, almost pocket-sized. Brennecke also remains an elusive figure, as little is said about Brennecke in any of the secondary sources that cite him. In 1938, the

¹ Lisa Pine, *Education in Nazi Germany*, (Oxford: Berg, 2010), 96-97.

² Pine, 97; Elizabeth Fox, “Rebuilding Germany’s Children: The Nazi Indoctrination and Postwar Reeducation of the Hitler Youth,” *Furman Humanities Review: Volume 27*, (Greenville, SC: Furman University, 2017), 36.

³ Pine, 97.

⁴ Pine, 98 and 100.

⁵ Pine, 102.

Primer was translated by Dr. Harwood L. Childs, a professor of politics at Princeton University, and included a commentary at the end by William E. Dodd, ambassador to Germany. This Primer discusses various academic subjects, such as eugenics and racial science, geopolitics, and economics. Despite this lack of information on the editor/author and its printings, it does not change the impact of this thesis, for this analysis serves as an example of the decisions made by the Nazi Party through Brennecke on how they wanted to present their ideology.

Within literature of the Third Reich, the Nazi Primer is mostly cited as primary source exemplifying the content that was taught to the Hitler Youth. It has been referenced primarily in books about the Hitler Youth, education, or the development of anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany. For example, Blackburn's *Education in the Third Reich* references the Primer to support statements about teaching racial studies, while Walter Kotschnig's "Educational Changes in Germany, 1936–1939" cites the Primer as an example of how the reorganization of education in Nazi Germany led to publications of handbooks and pamphlets in lieu of textbooks.⁶ Handbooks and pamphlets were written by Nazi academics and often included practical advice in place of most of the traditional teachings. This shows the devaluation of academia in Hitler's Germany and a preference towards training and indoctrination in the Hitler Youth.⁷

While it is not clear whether the Primer was meant for use by Hitler Youth members or their leaders, considering their slogan "Youth Must Lead Youth," it is highly likely that the Primer was used by youth leaders for ideological instruction of their peers. The introduction to the Nazi Primer states, "To foster the building up of a political will in the *Hitler* Youth organization according to the National Socialist outlook on life is, therefore, the task of this little handbook

⁶ Walter M. Kotschnig, "Chapter IX: Educational Changes in Germany, 1936–1939," *Review of Educational Research* 9, no. 4 (July 1939): 372–76, p. 374-375, (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 1939).

⁷ *Ibid.*

for the schooling of the Hitler Youth.” However, this thesis will argue that the Nazi Party was willing to allow ideological flexibility as demonstrated in this Primer; by downplaying the racist aspects of Nazi ideology, the Primer addresses anxieties of popular support of policies. This thesis will further explore this simplification of academic Nazi ideology for a popular audience and the framing of this ideology in a nationalist dialogue.

Significantly, there are almost no citations in this Primer to explain where the ideas and information came from, so this thesis will first layout the debates in each section of the Primer, and then explain which side the Primer aligned with. Further, this thesis will argue that the authors of the primer consistently sided with the less ideologically extreme pole of the debate over the more outwardly racist positions. Additionally, this thesis will take Fox’s statement a step further by arguing that the Primer chose to downplay anti-Semitic beliefs in a compromise for policy support. Overall, this thesis will contribute to the scholarship on Nazi propaganda through a case study of the Primer, analyzing the willingness of the Party to be ideologically flexible in their writing to increase policy support.

The Debate on the Aim of Nazi Propaganda

In review of secondary literature, there is a debate between two schools of thought: the first is that Nazi propaganda aimed to align popular beliefs fully with party beliefs, and the second is the argument that the Nazis were willing to be ideologically flexible in order to garner popular support of their policies. The renowned Nazi propaganda historian, David Welch, argues on behalf of the former; he writes that the main aim of Nazi propaganda was to create “uniformity

of opinion” among the German people.⁸ Welch believes that Nazi propaganda policies were aimed towards aligning the public political views with the Nazi political aims. According to this theory, the Nazi party wanted the German people to hold the same ideologies, specifically putting the “community before the individual.”⁹ Explaining this, Welch writes, “To this end, the political function of propaganda was to coordinate the political will of the nation with the aims of the state.”¹⁰ Welch argues that according to his theory, the Nazis used propaganda to convince the German people to believe in the same ideological values. As part of his argument, Welch also writes that the Nazis prioritized indoctrination of the youth.¹¹

Similar to Welch, historians Nico Voigtländera and Hans-Joachim Voth agree that Nazi indoctrination of the youth was a central propagandist aim. They argue that “Nazi indoctrination—in school, through propaganda, and in youth organizations—successfully instilled strongly anti-Semitic attitudes in the cohorts that grew up under the Nazi regime.”¹² To further their thesis, Voigtländera and Voth referenced the Nazi Primer, stating that, “the official handbook for schooling the Hitler Youth devoted fully 45 out of 105 pages to racial ideology.”¹³ Voigtländera and Voth agree that that the aim of Nazi propaganda was to create uniformity of opinion—specifically, in terms of anti-Semitism.

⁸ David Welch, *Manufacturing a Consensus: Nazi Propaganda and the Building of a 'National Community'*, *Contemporary European History*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Mar. 1993), pp. 1-15 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 1.

⁹ Welch, 4.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Welch, 11

¹² Nico Voigtländera and Hans-Joachim Voth, “Nazi indoctrination and anti-Semitic beliefs in Germany,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, Jun 2015, 112 (26) 7931-7936, (St. Louis, MO: Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America, 2015), 7933.

¹³ Voigtländera and Voth, 7931.

A third historian, Julius Yourman, argues against this position, instead focusing on the theory that Nazi propaganda was used to garner support of policies. He writes:

Fascist Germany illustrates how propaganda is used both to bring a dictator into power and to aid him in maintaining and extending that power. In Germany, the propaganda which helped convince the people of the efficiency of the National Socialist solution for the country's political and economic problems was reinforced by an army of storm troopers that weakened opposition through terrorism.¹⁴

Yourman states how propaganda was used to convince Germans that party policies were good ideas, whether or not state ideologies aligned with personal beliefs.

This thesis defends Yourman's stance in the debate over whether Nazi propaganda was driven by the goal of uniformity of opinion or whether it accepted ideological flexibility in exchange for policy support. A case study of the Nazi Primer implies that the Nazi Party was willing to compromise their ideological agenda, in order to garner support of their policies. This compromise in beliefs in return for political support goes against Welch's thesis of uniformity of opinion and Voigtländera and Voth's argument that the Primer aimed for universal anti-Semitism. In contrast, by showing how the Nazi Primer downplayed hostility to the Jews, this thesis shows that anti-Semitism was rather lower down the list of Nazi propaganda priorities. While there was a significant number of pages devoted to racial beliefs, it tended to favor an eugenic point of view rather than the racist ideologies of Nazi racial scientists. Additionally, the anti-Semitic elements of Nazism were very much downplayed in the sections on economics and geopolitics. Hence, the eugenic writing in the Primer is a milder version of Party ideology, and therefore, not "strongly anti-Semitic." In this case study, the racist undertones will be addressed; however, this thesis will argue propagandists made intentional choices to continually downplay

¹⁴ Julius Yourman, "Propaganda Techniques Within Nazi Germany," *Journal of Educational Sociology*, Vol. 13, No. 3, *Education Under Nazism* (Nov., 1939), pp. 148-163, (Washington, D.C.: American Sociological Association, 1939), 148.

anti-Semitism throughout the Primer in order to increase support of party policies. This Primer shows on a granular level what decisions Nazi propagandists were making in terms of ideological content, as they transformed knowledge from the elite to the popular.

Chapter Outline

The first chapter of this thesis discusses the debate between racial science and eugenics, and which side the Primer implicates more in its writings. Although Arthur de Gobineau was one of the earliest academics of racial science, at the end of the German Empire, Kaiser Wilhelm II was quite impressed by Houston Stewart Chamberlain, whose works would greatly influence the Weimar and Nazi racial theorists that followed after him. According to Field, Chamberlain believed in Hitler as a leader and thought his policies would bring a rejuvenated success to Germany.

The debate between eugenics and racial science was often articulated in the terms of creating a stronger German *Volk* based on physiologic and psychological concerns or based on racial and political concerns. Eugenacists argued that the sterilization of the mentally and/or physically disabled would ensure the longevity of the Aryan race. Even if the eugenacists sometimes had personal prejudices, their writings mostly avoided the language of race or downplayed the racial elements. In contrast, the racial scientists centered their academic works on the differences between inferior and superior races. They warned their readers of the “dangers” brought by the Jewish population and why interracial marriages must be avoided to ensure a higher quality of morality and health; additionally, a few argued that Jews also affected the economy in negative ways. In order to address this widespread concern of race in Germany, a committee was formed with scientists and eugenacists to create racial policies for Germany. Through this case study, it will be evident that the Primer will include eugenacists’ theories,

choosing to downplay the prejudicial language and racist theories of the racial scientists, in order to gain support of eugenic policies, such as sterilization.

The second chapter analyzes the debate in Nazi economics between rearmament and recovery. The two leaders in this debate were Hjalmar Schacht, who pushed for the restoration of the German economy post-WWI, and Hermann Göring, whose focus was on rearmament. Schacht worked towards his goals of economic stability through his New Plan, which decreased imports of raw materials and increased exports of produced goods. Economists who preached ideologies similar to those within Schacht's New Plan, such as Gottfried Feder and Carl Goerdeler, prioritized market economics and/or economic stability; they argued that if economic stability could be achieved, then the problem of food scarcity could be addressed. Additionally, they were opposed to Göring's Four Year Plan, as they thought rearmament would cause economic failure. In contrast, economists such as Krosigk and Darré supported Göring and a command economy. The economists under Göring had a nationalist agenda—they prioritized rearmament, addressed unemployment and starvation concerns, and they promised tax breaks and agrarian land reform for Aryans who were racially and politically aligned with the Nazis. Hitler and Göring, acting as a pseudo-economist, put political goals above economic demands. Many of the Four-Year-Plan economists were more outwardly racist in their ideologies and policies, unlike those more closely aligned with Schacht who may have been complicit with Nazi policies but had opposing personal beliefs. While some created anti-Semitic policies, like Göring, Darré, and Funk, others, like Goerdeler and Schacht, were opposed to the violence of the Holocaust but still held anti-Semitic views of Jews as citizens. The Primer is explicit in its support of the Four Year Plan, however, it chooses to focus on the need of economic recovery (like Schacht), rather than the goal of rearmament (like Göring). Similar to the section on racial

studies, when discussing economics, the Primer pushes a nationalistic agenda over an explicitly racist agenda, attempting to garner support for policies, such as the Four Year Plan.

The third chapter is an analysis of the responses to the German problems of population and territory. After World War I, Germany had reached its lowest birth rate yet, due to the high rates of unemployment and starvation, as an effect of the economic depression. After a study and publication by Nazi demographer, Friedrich Burgdörfer, there was a concern that if this was not addressed, the Germanic Aryan race would eventually die out. There was a two-fold response to this problem: population policies to improve the “quality and the quantity” of the German people.¹⁵ The “qualitative” agenda focused on race, disability, and mental health, while the quantitative agenda focused on the relationship between childbirth and economic factors. Some of the initiatives to increase the growth of the Aryan population included marriage loans, tax benefits for large families, and gifts from Party leaders to encourage couples to have many children. Nazi theorists figured a higher population of children would require more food, which would drive an increase agricultural production, which would boost the economy.

While policies to increase quantity of the population focused more on economic rewards, the task of improving the “quality” of the population led to prejudicial policies, specifically in regards to the Jewish and disabled populations. For example, Frick passed the Law for the Prevention of Genetically Diseased Offspring, allowing certain populations (for example, people with mental and physical disabilities), to be sterilized. Additionally, eugenic clinics were opened, which screened individuals as a first step to many processes—part of their task was to prohibit Jews and Aryans from marrying (and therefore having children). Couples needed to be cleared

¹⁵Fritz Brennecke, *The Nazi Primer*, trans. Paul Childs, (New York: Harper & Brother, 1938), 84.

eugenically before qualifying for hereditary estates or the League of Large Families, both of which rewarded Nazi Aryan families. While the Primer briefly addresses the “qualitative” argument of population policies on the surface level, it devotes most of its pages to explaining the risk in the quantitative decline of the German population. By pushing an agenda of quantitative population increase instead of eugenic population theories, the Primer hopes to garner support for the policies to increase the Aryan population through eugenic screening and sterilization.

The second part of the third chapter addresses territory, which stemmed from population concerns. With the loss of World War I came the treaty of Versailles, which took away African colonies and some European lands from Germany. This loss of power, and more importantly, resources, was deeply humiliating and debilitating to German nationalists. The effects of the efforts to increase population meant there was also a push for more land for the *Volk*. Some Nazi geopolitical aims addressed reclaiming culturally German lands and expelling non-Aryans (Jews and Slavs), while others pushed for taking back their African colonies for raw materials and excess population. Despite the evident racial elements of both aims, many of the ideologies and policies regarding these geographic issues were whitewashed. If Germany were to reclaim their African and European lands and use them for the Aryan population, where would the local populations of Jews, Slavs, and Africans go? After deterritorialization came reterritorialization, the settlement of Aryan Germans, which was put into action through Walter Christaller’s Central Place Theory. Christaller’s theory re-planned the deterritorialized lands (such as Poland) to accompany the population movement as the Third Reich expanded. The academic Karl Haushofer wrote about reterritorialization as well, helping to provide academic justification for these policies. While surely, Germans would have been aware of the racial elements of

detritorialization, the Primer skips over this issue; instead, it focuses on nationalism—how Germany was wronged when these lands were taken, and how she deserves and needs the lands back under Nazi control. In this way, the Primer took a stand on the debates within Nazi academic geography: an argument about detritorialization made by Carl Schmitt aimed to create empty space in the east for Aryans by removing racial inferiors, i.e. Jews and Slavs. With that space, *Lebensraum* could be created. However, the Primer ignores the racial elements of detritorialization, instead focusing on the improvements to population, food, and culture that would come from reterritorialization of the east.

Since the former colonies of German were in Africa, they were not as easy to reclaim territorially. Instead, Epp and the Colonial Political Office worked to publicize why it was essential to re-colonize the African countries that were unjustly taken away through the Treaty of Versailles. The argument for colonialism defends that it is not for imperialistic reasons, but rather to regain raw materials to address food and economic problems. The writings on colonialism were whitewashed with an emphasis on nationalism. The Primer discusses both European expansion and colonialism from a nationalist perspective, white washing the debates. It ignores discussion of the African natives, Jews, and Slavs that would be expelled from the land, and instead argues that those lands are needed for the hopefully growing Germany population and for natural resources.

This thesis will argue that in regards to the Primer's sections on racial science, economics, and geopolitics, there were debates between outwardly racial and nationalistic ideologies. Through the analysis of the different arguments and comparison with the writing in the Primer, I will argue that the Primer chose the more nationalistic narrative, rather than a racist narrative. More significantly, this exclusion of racist language in the Primer will demonstrate

that the Nazis were willing to compromise on their ideology, in order to garner support of their policies.

Chapter 1: Racial Science and Eugenics

This thesis proposes that genetic theorists can be divided into two categories: eugenicists, or those who focused more on preserving “good genes,” and racial scientists, or those who focused more on racial hygiene and superiority of races. While there was an overlap between the two, some eugenicists were more racist than others, who were more concerned with overall preservation of desirable genes for humankind. The eugenicist work for the preservation of Germans compared to the racial science work for the advancement of the Aryan race shows the overarching debate between nationalism and explicit racism in academia and policies being propagandized by Nazi Germany.

Before entering the debate between eugenicists and racial scientists, both fields must first be defined. Eugenics is the scientific analysis of genetics in order to discover which traits make the human race more advanced. Secondly, eugenicists worked to find ways to encourage or retain these healthy, strong, and successful traits and ways to eliminate traits that are immoral, compromised, or unwanted. Eugenicists argued for a need for a healthier and stronger human race in general, so their studies offered theoretical ways to pick the best attributes from each race. Racial scientists, however, argued that there are superior and inferior races based on certain attributes (tangible and intangible); so, in order to create a purer, stronger, and more successful superior, racial scientists wrote that certain inferior races needed to be sterilized and eventually eliminated.

Kaiser Wilhelm Institutes

The Kaiser Wilhelm Institutes were hubs for both eugenics and racial science research. While the institutes began more as a field for eugenics, under Nazi control, many researchers within the society published racial science works. The Kaiser Wilhelm Society was created in 1910 on the one-hundredth anniversary of the University of Berlin. Its mission was to support scientific research, so in 1912, the Kaiser Wilhelm Institutes—a collection of laboratories for a multitude of disciplines—were erected as a national institute of science. The institutes fostered interdisciplinary work and encouraged theorists and applied scientists to work together.¹⁶ In 1922, the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Anthropology, Human Genetics, and Eugenics arose out of a country defeated by war and hoping for a physically, mentally, and morally stronger people. By 1933, there were thirty-one KWIs, and many scientists and theorists who greatly influenced Nazi ideology were part of the KWI for Anthropology, Human Genetics, and Eugenics, a few even serving as its director. Although these institutes were renowned and quite impressive, especially in the early years, Ehrenreich argues that the science they produced in this period was not as legitimate, considering it often lacked support from empirical data; he writes:

“There is compelling evidence that the theories that proponents used to rationalize Nazi racial, and especially anti-Jewish, policies were clearly not ‘scientific’ in any meaningful sense...this article demonstrates that the allegedly scientific theories supporting Nazi anti-Jewish policies...were clearly based on ambiguous empirical evidence and were often illogical.”¹⁷

Here, Ehrenreich is stating that Nazi racial scientists did not adhere to the norm of confirming their theories with empirical data. Rather, their theories were essentially compromised of their

¹⁶ Gretchen E. Schafft, *From Racism to Genocide: Anthropology in the Third Reich*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 46.

¹⁷ Eric Ehrenreich, "Otmar von Verschuer and the "Scientific" Legitimization of Nazi Anti-Jewish Policy," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, Volume 21, Issue 1, 1 March 2007, Pages 55–72, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). <https://muse.jhu.edu/>, 56.

own thoughts with no data or experiments that could be replicated to ensure the theories were viable. Thus, racial “science” was not scientific at all.

Eugenicists

The German eugenics movement began to come into existence towards the end of the 19th century. The main difference between eugenics and racial science is that eugenics focuses more on preserving strong genetics and eliminating “undesirable” genes to best improve the physical, mental, and moral wellbeing of the German people. In contrast, racial science focuses on the strengthening of superior races and the segregation or elimination of inferior races. The key difference is the superior/inferior complex among races rather than independent genes. Marius Turda’s chapter in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics* explains, “Even in Germany, where the concept of race was intensely cultivated by National Socialist ideology, eugenicists often specifically rejected racism. In their widely disseminated book on *Human Heredity*, Baur, Fischer, and Lenz hoped to dispel the accusations of racial supremacy associated with German racial hygiene.”¹⁸ Turda further explains that despite this resistance between the two fields, as the 1930s progressed, many German eugenicists began to frame their research in a racial context due to growing domination of the Nazi party.¹⁹ While there are many names in the upcoming analysis of eugenicists and racial scientists, it is more important to note their divisions: Baur and Ploetz were geneticists who identified “strong” and “weak” genes, while Rüdin and Lenz were proponents of sterilization for racial reasons.

¹⁸ Marius Turda, “Race, Science, and Eugenics in the Twentieth Century,” edited by Alison Bashford and Phillipa Levine, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 65.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

Erwin Baur was a geneticist and a botanist. Although he confirmed Mendel's three laws of uniformity, segregation, and independence in *Human Heredity*, most of his research focused on non-Mendelian genetics, specifically plastid inheritance, which takes the genes of only one parent.²⁰ In *Human Heredity*, Baur demonstrates this passing of traits using diagrams of plants and animals. Bentley Glass explains that unlike many other German eugenicists, Baur never aligned with the Nazis (in fact he worked against them), but he contributed to *Human Heredity* simply due to the bitterness he felt after World War I and towards the outcomes of the Treaty of Versailles. After the events of WWI, Baur thought Germany was having a "eugenics crisis," hence his decision to contribute to *Human Heredity*.²¹ Baur stayed away from making political statements, and he did not let the rise of National Socialism racialize his research. While he did collaborate with many other eugenicists and a few racial scientists, his own work remained neutral, even if it was applied by others to a racist agenda.

Alfred Ploetz, a physician, biologist, and eugenicist, founded the German eugenics movement and coined the term "Racial Hygiene" in his 1895 work, *Grundlinien einer Rassenhygiene*.²² Ploetz's theory focused on "counterselection," in which unnatural factors (such as war or welfare for the poor) work against the processes of natural selection.²³ Ploetz argued that avoiding war and revolutions and not financing social welfare for the poor eliminates people with poor genes and encourages the fostering of good, strong genes in the fittest survivors in order to create an overall stronger race. Both Ploetz and Madison Grant, a leading American

²⁰ Rudolf Hagemann, "Erwin Baur or Carl Correns: who really created the theory of plastid inheritance?", *Journal of Heredity*, Vol. 91, no. 6, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 435.

²¹ Bentley Glass, "A Hidden Chapter of German Eugenics between the Two World Wars," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 125, No. 5 (Oct. 1, 1981), pp. 357-367, (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1981), p. 363.

²² Robert Proctor, *Racial Hygiene: Medicine under the Nazis*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 15.

²³ *Ibid.*

eugenicist and conservationist who regarded by the Nazis as the father of modern eugenics, moved the eugenics movement from the individual to an entire race (in Grant's case) or to a more societal level (in Ploetz's). Grant was well known for his book, *The Passing of the Great Race* (1916), in which he presented his Nordic theory; to clarify, Grant's writings were on groups who were "racially unfit" rather than individuals.²⁴

Sterilization

Ploetz, the founding father of racial hygiene, continued to influence his field throughout the Weimar Republic, often working with his colleague, Ernst Rüdin, and into the Third Reich. Ernst Rüdin was a psychiatrist, geneticist, and eugenicist whose scholarship mostly concerned sterilization. Similarly, Fritz Lenz's chapters of *Human Heredity* explained hereditary human diseases, where he argues they come from, and how talents can be hereditary too. The significant aspects of Lenz's work are the focus on where hereditary diseases come from—in chapter ten of *Human Heredity*, Lenz argues that these genetic mutations for diseases stem from alcohol and nicotine abuse, sexually transmitted diseases, medical poisons (for example, iodine and mercury), and x-rays.²⁵

Rüdin, along with Günther, Lenz, Ploetz, Schirach, and a few others, were chosen by Reich Minister of the Interior Wilhelm Frick for the *Expert Committee on Questions of Population and Race Policy* in June of 1933 to goal was to construct racial policies.²⁶ On July 14, 1934, Frick approved the Nazi sterilization law, "Law for the Prevention of Genetically

²⁴ Jonathan Peter Spiro, *Defending the master race: conservation, eugenics, and the legacy of Madison Grant*, (Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England, 2009), 138.

²⁵ Erwin Baur, Eugen Fischer, and Fritz Lenz, *Human Heredity*, (New York: Macmillan, 1931), 472-477.

²⁶ Proctor, 95.

Diseased Offspring,” which Rüdin, with the assistance of the others, co-wrote.²⁷ Lenz, both a geneticist and a eugenicist, believed National Socialism and Hitler were the best government to encourage eugenics and bring about “a healthier race.”²⁸ While Lenz’s writings were not explicitly anti-Semitic, his works had a fair number of racist implications, and they were certainly used by others for racist agendas. Additionally, Lenz thought Nazi policies, such as sterilization, for example, would help achieve eugenic goals. The sterilization movement started as a way of controlling “problem populations” (those in asylums, prisons, and hospitals), but through the work of Nazi academics, such as Rüdin, it became a method of targeting certain races, such as Jews.²⁹ While Joseph and Wetzel write, “As seen in two 1938 articles he co-authored with Ploetz... Rüdin supported every policy and crime directed against the Jewish people,” it seems that Rüdin’s works mostly center more on the side of the eugenics debate—sterilization for a healthier human race, despite the frequent racial undertones of his arguments.³⁰ Ploetz, while personally anti-Semitic, often wrote that the Jewish race was as civilized as the European races.³¹ Though Lenz’s research and writings focused mostly on diseases, he does break down which races are more susceptible to certain morbid dispositions compared to others, but overall, his writing is focused more on genetics and poor habits than racial elements.

²⁷ Melvyn Conroy, *Nazi Eugenics: Precursors, Policy, Aftermath*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 294; Wistrich, Robert, *Who’s Who in Nazi Germany*, (London: Routledge, 2013), 213.

²⁸ Benno Müller-Hill, *Murderous science: elimination by scientific selection of Jews, Gypsies, and others in Germany, 1933-1945*. Translated by George R. Fraser. (Plainview, N.Y.: Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press, 1998), 82.

²⁹ Susanne Klausen and Alison Bashford, “Fertility Control, Eugenics, Neo-Malthusianism, and Feminism,” edited by Alison Bashford and Phillipa Levine, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 104.

³⁰ Jay Joseph and Norbert A. Wetzel, “Ernst Rüdin: Hitler’s Racial Hygiene Master,” *Journal of the History of Biology*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (Berlin: Springer, 2013), 1-30. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42628760>, 7.

³¹ Paul Weindling, “German Eugenics and the Wider World: Beyond the Racial State,” edited by Alison Bashford and Phillipa Levine, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 318-319.

Racial Scientists

Racial science, which developed out of fields like eugenics, approached topics from a similar genetic and biological point of view, but often targeted specific races in a context of inferior and superior races. Weinreich cites a speech from Nazi biologist, Otmar von Verschuer, in which he said anthropology, eugenics, medical constitutions-research, and experimental genetics were some of the major fields that led to the development of racial science.³² “Racialism,” Weinreich explains, was “simultaneously admired as a science and revered as religion.”³³ Weinreich explains also how there developed a term called “political biology” which linked theory and action—theorists would write narratives that made Jews the scapegoats for problems past and present, and then party leaders would create anti-Semitic policies on the basis of these political “biological” writings.³⁴ This political biology influenced not only the Nazi government, but the German people as well. Significantly, Weinreich explains that while some of these revered scientists feared how they would be regarded by the international academic community, they relied on the renowned reputation of German scholarship; their reputation was indeed strong, as German academia continued to be a leader in the scientific world, and thus, their reputations were safe.³⁵

In contrast to eugenicists Lenz and Rüdin, Otmar von Verschuer, a Nazi biologist, geneticist, and racial scientist, approached pathological heredity, sterilization, and twin studies from a racist perspective. While his first edition of *Hereditary Pathology* was not anti-Semitic,

³² Max Weinreich, *Hitler's Professors: The Part of Scholarship in Germany's Crimes Against the Jewish People*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 27.

³³ Weinreich, 36.

³⁴ Weinreich, 28.

³⁵ Weinreich, 36.

the subsequent editions and his *Textbook of Racial Hygiene* were.³⁶ Ehrenreich argues that after 1933, when the Nazis took power, Verschuer began to write more against “the Jewish race”.³⁷ In Verschuer’s article, “Racial Biology of the Jews,” he claims that scientists agree that there is a higher frequency of mental illness among Jews.³⁸ This article was originally published in 1938 in the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute periodical, *Forschungen für die Judenfrage, (Researches on the Jewish Problem)*; in 1983, it was translated by an anti-Semitic magazine, *Liberty Bell Publication*, that also published a translation of the highly anti-Semitic, fabricated work, *Protocols of Zion*.³⁹ Quite important to note, Josef Mengele was a student of Verschuer and became his assistant during the same time that he became the head doctor at Auschwitz.⁴⁰

According to Degen:

One of Verschuer’s most notable “achievements” as a scientist was to provide a scientific foundation for Nazi racial theory and to support its implementation through the practice of “racial hygiene.” In many ways, he helped turn the Nazi racial laws and policies into reality. His collaboration with Mengele involved him deeply in the medical atrocities committed during the War. Mengele frequently sent Verschuer blood specimens, eye samples, organs, and body parts taken from concentration camp inmates in Auschwitz after they had been killed.⁴¹

Verschuer was influential in defending Nazi racial policies; while eugenicists like Rüdin, Ploetz, and Lenz developed the theories and wrote the laws, it was racial scientists like Verschuer who tested the theories on “racially inferior” humans and used those laws to validate genocide.

³⁶ Ehrenreich, 62.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Otmar Freiherr von Verschuer, “Racial Biology of the Jews,” translated by Charles E. Weber, *Liberty Bell Publications*, (Reedy, WV: Liberty Bell Publications, 1983), 14.

³⁹ *Ibid.*; <https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/bib101472> ; Sergei Nilus, *The Protocols of the Meetings of the Learned Elders of Zion*, trans. Victor E. Marsden, (Reedy, WV: Liberty Bell Publications, 2004).

⁴⁰ Peter Degen, “Racial Hygienist Otmar von Verschuer, the Confessing Church, and Comparative Reflections on Post-War Rehabilitation,” *Japan’s Wartime Medical Atrocities: Comparative Inquiries in Science, History, and Ethics*, pages 155-165, (London: Routledge, 2013), 156.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

Alfred Rosenberg was also one of the most influential Nazi theorists and ideologues, despite the fact that he was a pseudo-academic.⁴² Rosenberg's influence on eugenics and racial science stemmed from the eugenicists that came before him, particularly Houston Stewart Chamberlain and Gobineau.⁴³ Madison Grant, Hans Günther, Fritz Lenz, and Eugen Fischer were the other main scientists whose theories on race and eugenics influenced Nazi ideology. Field argues that Chamberlain was the most influential race publicist of the 19th century; his writings on race and anti-Semitism led to a larger racist and nationalist pathology in the political culture of Germany. Chamberlain's main points of his famous novel *Foundations of a Nineteenth Century* were that Jews were somehow connected to all wars in history and that capitalism was invented by Jews.⁴⁴ According to Field, Chamberlain was one of the first to write that conversion would not solve the Jewish Question, as the problem was the Jewish race not the Jewish religion.⁴⁵ In contrast, Günther believes that Jews are not a race but a nation, because they often look different and can practice different religions. However, he still considers them an inferior people to the Nordic race, and thinks they need to be separated from Gentiles.⁴⁶ Like Günther, Eugen Fischer (anthropologist, eugenicist, and physiologist) argued against mixed race marriages and for segregation of races in his 1913 work, *The Rehoboth Bastards and the Bastardization problem Among Humans*. His segregation theory argues that by keeping the races separate, the races would remain purer, because Fischer believed inferior traits were dominant and would thus

⁴² Jürgen Matthäus and Frank Bajohr, *The Political diary of Alfred Rosenberg and the onset of the Holocaust*, (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017), 3; Wistrich, 255 and 257.

⁴³ Wistrich, 256; Matthäus, 416.

⁴⁴ Geoffrey G. Field, *Evangelist of race: the Germanic vision of Houston Stewart Chamberlain*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 190.

⁴⁵ Field, 311.

⁴⁶ Hans F.K. Günther, *The Racial Elements of European History*, trans. G.C. Wheeler, (London: Methuen and Co., 1927; Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1970), 74-79.

lead to survival of the unfittest.⁴⁷ Although Fischer did not back up his theories with evidence, his racist theories were rewarded with a professorship.⁴⁸ Unlike Günther, Chamberlain, and Rosenberg, “Fischer’s scholarly anti-Semitism was too mild for the National Socialists.”⁴⁹ Like Chamberlain, Fischer believed that there was a Jewish race; however, Müller-Hill explains that Fischer believed that Jews were not an inferior race and that mixed marriages with Jews did not necessarily result in lower intellect or morality.⁵⁰ In his essay, *Die Spur der Juden im Wandel der Zeiten*, Rosenberg mentions that he agrees with Chamberlain’s belief that Jews are intolerant and violent towards Gentiles.⁵¹ While Rosenberg agrees with Chamberlain’s racial history, it is Gunther’s definition and characteristics of race that Rosenberg writes are acceptable.⁵²

Racial Science Scholarship

Mosse says Chamberlain’s *Foundations* is not legitimate scholarship, but since twenty-eight editions were published from 1899 to 1942, its popularity demonstrates that it was an important historical document of German ideology.⁵³ Likewise, Wistrich writes that *Myth of the Twentieth Century* was considered like a second bible of Nazism (behind *Mein Kampf*, of course), despite the fact that many did not read it (at least in its entirety), due to the confusing manner in which it was written. His book dealt with “blood purity,” degenerate art, and morality, all within an anti-Semitic and anti-Christian context. Rosenberg was influential with his book

⁴⁷ Conroy, 39.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ Müller-Hill, 84.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ Robert Pois, *Race and Race History and Other Essays by Alfred Rosenberg*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), 182.

⁵² Alfred Rosenberg, *The Myth of the Twentieth Century*, trans. Vivian Bird, (Torrance, CA: The Noontide Press, 1982; Munich: Hoheneichen-Verlag, 1930), 40 and 179.

⁵³ George L. Mosse, introduction to *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century vol. 1*, (New York: Howard Fertig, 1968), v.

selling innumerable copies, despite the confusing syntax the unorganized manner in which *Myth of the Twentieth Century* was written, because it was one of the first attempts at a comprehensive collection of Nazi ideologies.⁵⁴ Spiro writes that Rosenberg highly regarded the work of Madison Grant and that Grant's writings indirectly influenced the writings of Hitler through Grant's close contact with Eugen Fischer and Hans F.K. Günther.⁵⁵

Günther, one of Hitler's favorite writers, was known to cite Grant often; Spiro described Günther as a "friend and disciple of Madison Grant."⁵⁶ Grant was well known for his book, *The Passing of the Great Race* (1916), in which he presented his Nordic theory. Spiro writes that Günther's *Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes* cites Grant, as well as Chamberlain. Günther's works were crucial to Hitler's thoughts on race, and in addition, his theories were widely read, with *Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes* selling over 91,000 copies.⁵⁷ Due to his massive success and popularity, Günther was nicknamed *Rassengünther*.⁵⁸ According to Steinweis, Günther's theories were significant not because of their originality, but rather, "his technique was to consume and sort through the large and growing literature on race, synthesize his own conclusions based on the research of others, and explain it all in a clear, straightforward manner to a broad readership"; this is significant, because although Günther's writings were outwardly racist, his writings on race were the most concrete and easiest to understand.⁵⁹ Günther is the only academic cited in the Primer, probably because of his ability to write for a popular rather than academic audience. While there is not an English translation of *Rassenkunde des deutschen*

⁵⁴ Wistrich, 257.

⁵⁵ Spiro, 357.

⁵⁶ Spiro, 360.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Conroy, 291.

⁵⁹ Alan E. Steinweis, *Studying the Jew: Scholarly Antisemitism in Nazi Germany*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2009), 26.

Volkes, there is an English version of his follow up work, *The Racial Elements of European History*. In this later work, Günther describes in depth the five different European races and the challenges they face. The “challenges” the European races face, according to Günther, is hereditary mixing with outside races, specifically “the Negro strain, the Hither Asiatic race, the Oriental race, and the Jewish nation,” although Günther writes the most about Jews.

Eugenics in the Nazi Primer

According to the introduction to the Nazi Primer, its aim is to “foster the building up of a political will in the Hitler Youth organization according to the National Socialist outlook on life.”⁶⁰ The book also claims to be a means to connect theory and practice; National Socialism, it claims, is indeed a bridge between theory and practice unlike the past, which had separation between leadership and ideologues.⁶¹

While a figure like Alfred Rosenberg would seem to be the best representation of both a National Socialist leader and an ideologue, his works are not cited in the Primer. Instead, the only author cited in the Primer is Günther. As mentioned in the previous section on scholarship, Günther’s works acted as bridge between academe and the general public. Since the Primer is a publication of the Nazi party, one might imagine it would include more ideas of racial scientists, since that is what Nazi policies became; however, based on the analyses below, it seems that the Nazi Primer drew more from the eugenics debate, rather than that of the racial scientists.

Both the Primer and Baur’s section in *Human Heredity* validate Mendel’s three laws: uniformity, segregation, and independence. More similar, however, are the examples and

⁶⁰ Brennecke, 4.

⁶¹ Brennecke, 3.

graphics they choose to use. Both exemplify heredity using a graphic of crossing red and white flowers. More distinct is the similar images of an underweight and an overweight pig as an example of how genetics can be unaffected by environmental factors.⁶² These examples show that the Primer is choosing to propagandize biological eugenics, rather than racial eugenics by using similar depictions in Baur's writings.

The next section of the Primer discusses sterilization. However, rather than taking the view of Ploetz and Verschuer, it quite clearly sides with Rüdin and Lenz quoting Lenz's argument almost word for word. In a chapter entitled "The Origination of Hereditary Morbid Predispositions," Lenz writes, "morbific heredity factors must have originated in the same sort of way the heredity factors are termed normal."⁶³ Lenz then explains across multiple pages factors that cause these "morbid predispositions" (which he exemplifies as epilepsy, imbecility, schizophrenia, feeble-mindedness, and other types of mental disorders). Lenz claims that these factors that affect morbid heredity are alcohol, poisons (such as "lead, mercury, phosphorous, nicotine, carbon disulphide, benzol, anilin...quinine, iodine, and arsenic"), radiation and x-rays, syphilis.⁶⁴ The Primer includes a chapter, "Heredity and Race Fostering," which is extremely similar to Lenz's writings; this chapter includes the following passage:

Besides hereditary diseases, there are germinal injuries, which likewise affect successive generations. They can be called forth by misuse of alcohol and nicotine, by industrial poisons, radium and X-rays, and by sexual diseases. A large proportion of the idiots and epileptics, for example, owe their sad state to alcoholism and sexual diseases. Even criminal tendencies go back to hereditary diseases and germinal injuries."⁶⁵

⁶² Brennecke, 51; Baur, 33.

⁶³ Baur, Fischer, Lenz, 264.

⁶⁴ Baur, Fischer, Lenz, 472-477.

⁶⁵ Brennecke, 67-68.

This paragraph is a clear reflection of the Lenz text in that it points out the same four major causes. In an earlier passage, the Primer also notes similar morbid predispositions as mentioned above, particularly mentioning “congenital weak mindedness, schizophrenia (mental lapses) lunacy (mental sickness), hereditary epilepsy, hereditary St. Vitus dance, hereditary blindness and deafness, and the serious hereditary malformations of the body.”⁶⁶ This sentence reflects the earlier reference from Lenz’s writings. Joseph and Weltzer’s article on Ernst Rüdin reflects that his writing mentioned similar hereditary illnesses. They write, “This law [The Law for the Prevention of Genetically Diseased Offspring] provided for the compulsory eugenic surgical sterilization of people diagnosed with "genetic" conditions such as feeble-mindedness, schizophrenia, manic-depressive insanity, genetic epilepsy, Huntington's chorea, genetic blindness or deafness, or severe alcoholism.”⁶⁷ The conditions listed in the law are very similar to those referred to in Lenz’s writings and also the Nazi Primer. Rüdin, who co-wrote this law (made legal on July 14, 1933), seems to influence another section of the Primer, which discusses the law more explicitly:

The law for the preventing the increase of hereditary diseases prescribes the voluntary and also compulsory sterilization of those persons who, in consequence of serious hereditary diseases, may, ‘as is with great probability to be expected, according to the experiences of the medical profession, cause their descendants to suffer serious bodily and mental harm.’ The great feeling of responsibility of the legislator is shown in that the law’s application is limited to the most serious hereditary diseases, and in the inclusion of safety measure to prevent any misuse of the law.”⁶⁸

This passage from the Primer illustrates two important points: 1) it quotes the law itself, which, other than the Günther references, is the only direct citation, although the author is not named, and 2) it represents how the Nazis were using the Primer to teach about their prejudicial actions

⁶⁶ Brennecke, 63.

⁶⁷ Jay and Wetzel, 3.

⁶⁸ Brennecke, 71-71.

in a way that tries to legitimize their actions by using science and appealing to one's moral conscience. More so, by choosing to reference Lenz and Rudin's ideologies of sterilization to combat hereditary diseases, the Primer puts forward more of a nationalist argument. In contrast, if it had discussed Ploetz and Verschuer, both of whom explicitly mentioned Jews (although Ploetz's writings on Jews were not explicitly anti-Semitic), it would have told a narrative that clearly addressed race at the forefront. Instead, the Primer picked the non-outwardly racist arguments of Baur, Lenz, and Rüdin.

In George Mosse's *Nazi Culture*, he includes a translated excerpt from Hans F.K. Günther's *Kleine Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes* (Munich, 1928). In this excerpt, Günther defines race and describes the Nordic race. These details are referenced almost word for word (although written slightly more colloquially) in the Primer on pages 14-20. First, the Primer directly quotes Günther's definition of race (although the two English translations differ slightly). Second, Günther writes, "What is different from nation to nation—from the ethnological viewpoint—is not, for instance, the race as such, but the proportion in which the races are mixed."⁶⁹ Similarly, the Primer states, "One thing, however, does distinguish peoples from each other. The proportions of races are different."⁷⁰ Finally, both works describe physical traits of the Nordic race: tall (1.75 meters), slender, long and narrow face, high set nose, skin color (Günther describes it as "roseate-bright", which the Primer colloquially interprets as "light, rosy-white"), and smooth straight or wavy blond hair.⁷¹ Most striking is that Günther references

⁶⁹ Hans F.K Günther, "Kleine Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes," excerpt in George Mosse's *Nazi Culture: Intellectual, Cultural and Social Life in the Third Reich*. (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1974).

⁷⁰ Brennecke, 14.

⁷¹ Günther (Mosse), 64; Brennecke, 17-18.

the Jewish race quite often within his text, yet the corresponding section in *Primer* does not mention Jews at all. In fact, Claudia Koonz's *Nazi Conscience* cites the *Primer* explaining:

In scholarly publications for teachers as well as in schoolbooks, “the Jewish Question” was integrated as one of many biological topics. Its very lack of salience made it more effective than blatant racial hate. Even the notorious *Nazi Primer*, a Hitler Youth textbook translated in 1938 by exiled Germans to discredit Nazism, devoted only three of its 256 pages to Jews.”⁷²

This is significant, because in regards to the more racist Nazi academics, like Günther, the *Primer* chose to reference elements that helped their nationalist narrative and to exclude the parts of their writings’ that were outwardly racist. Günther, who was a young racial scientist in the Weimar period, joined the Nazi Party before they even came to power. In the cases of those scientists who did have racial elements in their writings, the *Primer* seems to ignore those parts and instead focus on the arguments that seem less explicitly racial. Why? Like Koonz’s argument, it may have been easier for the public, in this case the children of the Hitler Youth, to believe in and support Nazi policies if they were able to ignore the more aggressively racist and violent elements of Nazi ideology.

Chapter 2: Nazi Economics

German economics appears to be divided by two main objectives: the first, that the goal of German economics should be to restore economic stability post-World War I, was led by Hjalmar Schacht, a Nazi banker and the leading economist until 1936, Hermann Göring, however, thought economics should shift its focus to rearmament.⁷³ Unlike Schacht, Göring was a pseudo-economist, but his Four Year Plan became a pillar of Nazi ideology, fully supported by Hitler. The following Nazi economists are either more in support of war economics or in support

⁷² Claudia Koonz, *The Nazi Conscience*, (Cambridge, MA : Harvard University Press, 2003), p.114.

⁷³ RJ Overy, *Goering*, (New York: Barnes and Noble Publishing, 2003), 51.

of restoration economics; additionally, there was also a debate between a liberal and free-market economy or a nationalistic, blood and soil command economy. Finally, some economists are more outwardly racist in their ideologies and policies, while others are complicit with Nazi policies but may have different personal beliefs. Within all three of these debates, Schacht and Göring took opposing stances. German-Israeli historian, Avraham Barkai argues in his book, *Nazi Economics: Ideology, Theory, and Policy*, that “under the Nazis, they seemed to ascribe to no economic theory and instead let political ideology drive the economy.”⁷⁴

Restoration and Market Economics or Rearmament and Command Economics

While Hitler ran his campaign on the promise of restoring the German economy with the message “Bread and Work”—he wanted to offer jobs and achieve *autarky* (self-sufficiency) for Germany. However, once in power, Hitler cared more about rearmament. Hjalmar Schacht, aimed to stabilize the Germany economy and decrease the trade deficit, which he accomplished from 1933-1936. Schacht was President of the National Bank (*Reichsbank*) 1933–1939 and became Minister of Economics (August 1934 – November 1937), although he never joined the NSDAP and was out of power before WWII started. He stabilized the German Mark and helped Germany recover from inflation with the creation of the Autobahn and other public work projects to provide jobs. He also enacted The New Plan to achieve German self-sufficiency, *autarky*, in the short term; Schacht’s plan enacted state control over foreign trade.⁷⁵ Schacht’s New Plan was the precursor to the Four-Year Plan; it decreased imports of raw materials, increased exports of produced good, and changed the foreign exchange rates. Schacht’s New Plan monitored exports,

⁷⁴ Avraham Barkai, *Nazi Economics: Ideology, Theory, and Policy*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 6.

⁷⁵ Overy, 54; Barkai, 177.

imports, and the rate of the Mark to foreign currency.⁷⁶ The application of bilateral trading prioritized which imports were necessary.⁷⁷ Schacht's plan provided long-term economic stability, so, overall, this plan was quite successful.⁷⁸ Nazi economists, who worked to prioritize economic stabilization, focusing more on market economics, were more aligned with Schacht's ideologies.

While Schacht worked to decrease Germany's dependency on imports, Carl Friedrich Goerdeler, an economist and politician during the Nazi regime, conversely thought Germany should increase imports. While Schacht and Goerdeler at first could not agree on financial policies, eventually, as disillusion with the Nazi party grew, both Goerdeler and Schacht (once opposed) decided to work together to attempt to move the German economy to becoming a free-market economy.⁷⁹ Although he personally believed in a free-market economy, Schacht thought that in the short-term, foreign trade needed to be heavily regulated by himself and the state until the economy was stabilized.⁸⁰ In order to stabilize the German economy and combat inflation, Schacht's New Plan made him an "economic dictator" and nationalized the economy, placing trade under strict government surveillance and control.⁸¹ Although it was against liberal economics, Schacht thought that full state control via a command economy was temporarily necessary until Germany could recover. Only certain raw materials were to be imported, and they

⁷⁶ Harold James, *The German Slump: Politics and Economics, 1924-1936*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 395.

⁷⁷ James, 397

⁷⁸ United States Office of Chief of Counsel for the Prosecution of Axis Criminality, *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*, (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1946), 738-767.

⁷⁹ Ian Kershaw, *Hitler Nemesis*, (New York: Norton 2000), 18-20; Peter Hoffman, *Carl Goerdeler and the Jewish Question, 1933-1942*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 29.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ Edward Norman Peterson, *Hjalmar Schacht: for and against Hitler*, (Boston: The Christopher Publishing House, 1954), 151-152.

would be exchanged for German goods or promissory notes, as decided by the state. After inflation was combatted, Schacht wanted to return Germany to a market economy permanently.

Gottfried Feder also believed in the nationalization of financial matters and businesses, but he believed in full state control for the long-term, not just until the economy was stabilized.⁸² Since Schacht only saw nationalization of trade in the short-term, Feder's plan somewhat contradicted Schacht's theories and practices. While Feder's works directly influenced Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, as the Nazi party came into power, both the NSDAP and even Feder himself began to shift their economic ideology.⁸³ In 1932, Feder worked with Nazi economist, Walter Funk to propose the Plan for Reconstruction with the goal of nationalizing business and banking under the cover of making concessions to businesses. Their plan, which preceded Schacht's New Plan, created a division between the state economy (lead by Feder) and private economy (lead by Funk).⁸⁴ The details of this plan were vague, but it did call for the nationalization of finance, banking, and foreign currency. Barkai adds, "Although the plan stated that, 'agriculture is the backbone of the domestic market and German economy,' it emphasized at once that agricultural recovery was subject to the recovery of the whole economy."⁸⁵ This notion that market economics is more important than agricultural economics is what separates the ideologies of Schacht, Feder and Goerdeler from those of Göring, Krosigk, and Darré.

Although Goerdeler did not think Schacht's plan would be good in the long term, he did agree it temporarily fixed some of the inflation errors. Additionally, Schacht and Goerdeler

⁸² Barkai, 23-24.

⁸³ Barkai, 26,

⁸⁴ Barkai, 46.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

agreed that rearmament was a poor decision that would be detrimental to Germany's economy.⁸⁶ Despite this, Hitler promoted Goerdeler to Reich Commissioner for the Implementation of the Four-Year Plan in 1931, although he never joined the National Socialist Party. Additionally, both Schacht and Goerdeler agreed upon the possible economic benefits of devaluing the *Reichsmark*; in contrast, Hitler, Göring, and Funk were extremely against that and made sure the Four-Year Plan would not allow devaluation.⁸⁷ Goerdeler drafted a memorandum to Hitler addressing his concerns of putting rearmament and war aims over market recovery through devaluation. Göring found Goerdeler's memorandum to the Four-Year Plan "completely useless," because Goerdeler suggested limiting rearmament (in opposition to Göring's beliefs).⁸⁸ Unlike the majority of Nazi economists, Goerdeler, like Schacht, thought that rearmament was the cause of German economic failure; furthermore, he thought that the primary economic goal should not be rearmament, but rather, it should be to undo foreign trade restrictions in order to attain the fatty foods needed to combat starvation.⁸⁹ However, by 1936, Hitler disagreed with both Schacht and Goerdeler; he, like Göring, thought that the primary goal should be rearmament and agricultural economics, not the stabilization of the market. In his memorandum from 1936, Hitler said, "The *Volk* does not live for the economy or for economic or financial theories; on the contrary, finance and economy, economic leaders and theories must all exclusively serve this struggle for self-assertion in which the *Volk* is engaged."⁹⁰ It is clear here that Hitler is putting political aims above economic aims.

⁸⁶ Adam Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction: The Making and the Breaking of the Nazi Economy*, (New York: The Penguin Group, 2006), 218.

⁸⁷ Tooze, 215-217; 223.

⁸⁸ Tooze, 219.

⁸⁹ Ian Kershaw, *Hitler, 1889-1936: Hubris*, (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1998), 579.

⁹⁰ The Archives of the German Foreign Ministry, "Unsigned Memorandum" (August 1936), *Documents on German Foreign Policy, Series C Volume V*, (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1957-1964), 856,

Nazi economist Fritz Reinhardt also agreed that political aims were important when deciding fiscal policy, and he took action to make this happen and make known to the public the Reich political economics goals. Reinhardt was chosen by Hitler in 1933 to be the Deputy Finance Minister under Johann Ludwig Graf Schwerin von Krosigk. He authored the section on financial policy in the book, *Germany Speaks*; this book was a collection of articles from twenty-one leaders of the Nazi party about policies and culture in the Third Reich. *Germany Speaks* was published in 1938 by Churchill's publisher and approved (as well as prefaced) by the Reich Minister for Foreign Affairs. According to the opening quote from Hitler, its goal was to share and clarify the policies, aims, and aspirations of Germany under Hitler with the English audience, so that the two countries could co-operate to achieve international peace.⁹¹ In Reinhardt's chapter, "Financial Policy," he outlines "the principal objects aimed at by the financial and fiscal policy of the new Reich" as follows: to combat unemployment, to increase raw materials for rearmament, and to adjust taxes.⁹² This reference to rearmament (although he refers to it as "defense forces") indicates alignment with Göring's Four Year Plan. To further this point, Reinhardt writes that Germany has "already begun to adjust our fiscal system to National Socialist principles;" in other words, he, like Hitler and Göring, believe that political aims must permeate economics.⁹³ Reinhardt put this ideology into practice via the Reinhardt program, which aimed to reduce unemployment. The Reinhardt program, which enacted many public works to increase jobs, was added to by Darré, when he became Reich Minister of Food and Agriculture; under Reinhardt's program, Darré created "projects for the improvement and

⁹¹ *Germany Speaks*, (London: Thorton Butterworth, 1938), 5.

⁹² Fritz Reinhardt, "Financial Policy," *Germany Speaks*, (London: Thorton Butterworth, 1938), 67.

⁹³ Reinhardt, 73.

reclamation of agricultural land.”⁹⁴ Reinhardt’s main financial duties as state Secretary of the Ministry of Finance concerned employment and taxation.⁹⁵ Often, Reinhardt worked to give tax breaks to the lower and middle classes and significantly, farmers, because he also emphasized an agrarian command economy like Göring.

Aly writes that while Lutz Graf Schwerin von Krosigk was not a political ideologue, he certainly was not a resister; rather he fell into a complicit grey area in between.⁹⁶ Although Krosigk supported rearmament like Göring, he, similar to Schacht, thought Germany needed to wait until the economy was completely stable before entering war.⁹⁷ Krosigk was the Minister of Finance of Germany from 1932-1945 and the de facto Chancellor of Germany in May 1945. He started working in the Reich Ministry of Finance in 1920; by 1925, he became General Officer of the Reich Budget, by 1929 Ministry Director and chief of the budget department, by 1931 chief of the reparations department, and finally, by 1932, Minister of Finance, which he continued to hold under Hitler until 1945.⁹⁸

Due to Goerdeler and Schacht’s falling out of favor among the Nazi leadership, in 1936, Göring was named Plenipotentiary of the Four Year Plan, which gave him control of various other governmental branches all with the united goal of transitioning to a war economy. Göring was able to override the economics department in his policy-making decisions, which created tension between him and Schacht. The main goal of Göring’s Four Year Plan was rearmament

⁹⁴ Dan P. Silverman, “Fantasy and Reality in Nazi Work-Creation Programs, 1933-1936,” *The Journal of Modern History*, vol. 65, no. 1, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 126.

⁹⁵ Randall Bytwerk, “Fritz Reinhardt and the Rednerschule der NSDAP”, *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, Vol. 67 No. 3, pgs. 298-309, (New York: Routledge, 1981), p. 309

⁹⁶ Götx Aly, *Hitler’s Beneficiaries*, (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2008), 310.

⁹⁷ Tooze, 38

⁹⁸ Johannes Hürter, "Schwerin von Krosigk, Lutz Graf", *Neue Deutsche Biographie* 24, pgs. 79-80, (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2010), 79-80; Aly, 25.

(which was against the agreement of the Treaty of Versailles), while the secondary goals were to create a higher standard of living and to be self-sufficient by 1940.⁹⁹ Self-sufficiency could be achieved by increasing natural resources; he thought an *Anschluss* would provide Germany with the natural resources and nutrient soil they lacked. The Four Year Plan was also supposed to reduce unemployment and increase public work projects, although Schacht's management had already succeeded in doing that. In order to do this, Göring wanted to increase synthetic material production, automobile production, and architectural projects, such as the improvement of the *Autobahn*.¹⁰⁰ The Four Year Plan was created in response to Hitler's demand for a war preparation, including an increase in raw materials, rearmament, an increase in synthetic fuel and rubber production, and the output of coal and iron. This shortage of raw materials also led to the production of synthetic fibers for clothes.¹⁰¹ In 1934, Wilhelm Keppler was tasked with the responsibility of overseeing the synthetic textiles program.¹⁰² Because of the economic repercussions of the acceleration of the rearmament program, a rift was created between Schacht and Keppler; in 1936, Schacht vetoed a proposal from Keppler to "alleviate the constraints on the steel industry by increasing the extraction and smelting of low-grade iron ore."¹⁰³ Although, Schacht vetoed because of the effect it would have on the economy, the tension between the two Nazi economists increased, as they represented opposing sides of the debate between market recovery versus rearmament.

According to Wistrich, "In 1936, Keppler became advisor to Göring, in the implementation of the Four-Year Plan, with special responsibility of securing raw materials for

⁹⁹ Overy, 50-51.

¹⁰⁰ Overy, 61.

¹⁰¹ Barkai, 231-232.

¹⁰² Tooze, 131.

¹⁰³ Tooze, 210.

industry.”¹⁰⁴ Wilhelm Keppler was a pseudo-economist, because while he had some experience in business, he never studied economics at university—rather, he had studied engineering. Keppler had personally helped finance the NSDAP, and he was rewarded by being named an economic adviser of the Nazi Party in 1931. Hugh Trevor-Roper described him in his journal as a “cracked economist” who blindly believed in Hitler with a religiosity. “From the spring of 1932 William Keppler served as personal economic advisor to the *Führer*, constituting a kind of independent economic advisory service.”¹⁰⁵ By July 1933, Keppler was promoted to Reich Commissioner for Economic Affairs. According to Tooze, Keppler was key to guaranteeing that economics was approached from a political point a view, the same ideology held by Hitler.¹⁰⁶

The Four Year Plan was also meant to address agricultural labor shortages. Agriculture was an essential element in Nazi ideology, and was a great concern to many academics as well politicians and party leaders. In order to address these concerns, the Four Year Plan dictated which crops were to be grown in order to combat scarce produce, such as vegetable fats.¹⁰⁷ While the Four Year Plan helped increase the output of beef and pork and the self-sufficient production of bread and grains, vegetable fats (such as butter) were still under produced.¹⁰⁸

Walter Funk was a German economist and Nazi official who served as Reich Minister for Economic Affairs from 1938 to 1945 under Göring. He studied law, economics, and philosophy at the Humboldt University of Berlin and the University of Leipzig. He was a nationalist and an anti-Marxist. Like Göring, Funk believed in the nationalization of agricultural as way to preserve

¹⁰⁴ Wistrich, 138.

¹⁰⁵ Barkai, 29.

¹⁰⁶ Tooze, 69.

¹⁰⁷ Barkai, 231.

¹⁰⁸ Frederick Strauss, “The Food Problem in the German War Economy,” *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. 55, No. 3 (May, 1941), pp. 364-412, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1941), 367.

the *Volk*. In 1933, he approved the launch of the Koch plan, which combatted unemployment by conscripting the unemployed to turn wastelands into new agricultural lands. The Koch plan, which was carried out in East Prussia, was followed by a series of similar plans in Berlin (called the Göring Plan), the Rhineland, Bavaria, and Franconia.¹⁰⁹ Richard Walther Darré was a radical Nazi agrarian, who was also a fervent believer of the “blood and soil” ideology. He was named the Reich Minister of Food and Agriculture from 1933 to 1942, although, during that time, he and Hjalmar Schacht, the head of the national bank, were not on good terms; Darré was more concerned with the racial elements of agrarian policy rather than having to stabilize and feed the country. Darré worked towards Nazi agrarian goals with Himmler and Rosenberg, in regards to acquiring *Lebensraum* lands. He believed that farms lands should be run by old Nordic families and should continue to be passed down from generation to generation within the same family. With the Hereditary Farm Law, Darré prioritized *Blut und Boden* (Blood and Soil) and had the ability to demand what the farmers would produce, how much they would produce, and who could farm.¹¹⁰ Darré’s nationalization of the farms helped with the rearmament Göring and Hitler called for, because it increased production of materials needed for war preparation and limited the number of farmers so that others would have to enter industrial labor (to create arms).¹¹¹ Darré’s policies are tangent examples of the ideology of an agrarian economy for war preparation through self-sufficiency and rearmament through Göring’s Four Year Plan.

Racism and Economics

Not only was there a debate between which type of economy and economic aims should rule, but there was a divide in Nazi economists over how outwardly racist theories and policies

¹⁰⁹ Tooze, 44-45.

¹¹⁰ Anna Rochester, *Farmers in Nazi Germany*, (New York: Farm Research, Inc., 1942), 14.

¹¹¹ Rochester, 25.

were. While some created anti-Semitic policies, like Göring, Darré, and Funk, others, like Goerdeler and Schacht, were anti-Holocaust but still anti-Semitic.

In Schacht's book, *The Magic of Money*, he expresses his outrage at the events of Kristallnacht.¹¹² He explains his own plan, which would have been to give Jews a loan when they emigrated, that would have given them enough foreign money to establish themselves, while Germany possessed their property for capital gain.¹¹³ Schacht thought his plan would give Jews freedom via financial policy. It is important to note, however, that this text was written in 1967, more than twenty years after the Holocaust. While Schacht proposed an actual plan to Hitler, Goerdeler instead tried to work secretly from the inside. By 1936, Goerdeler became opposed to the Nazi party, and he resigned from public office and began working undercover as the director of the overseas sales department at the firm of Robert Bosch GmbH. Although Goerdeler was anti-Semitic (he thought that Jews should leave Germany and create their own country on a different continent, such as South America), he, like Schacht, was extremely opposed to the violent anti-Semitic acts carried out by the Nazis, including *Kristallnacht*, the Holocaust deportations and concentration camps, the boycott of Jewish businesses, the Nuremberg Laws, etc. He even was in contact with spy organization and world leaders, such as Winston Churchill to inform them of the anti-Semitic atrocities occurring in German and Poland.¹¹⁴

In opposition to Schacht and Goerdeler, Feder was very anti-Semitic, and wrote that, “no Jew can be a citizen” in part of his 25 Points of National Socialism.¹¹⁵ Similarly, Göring

¹¹² Hjalmar Schacht, *The Magic of Money*, trans. Paul Erskine, (London: Oldbourne, 1967), 58.

¹¹³ Schacht, 59.

¹¹⁴ Peter Hoffman, *History of the German Resistance, 1933-1945*, trans. Richard Barry, (London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 106, 240.

¹¹⁵ <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/imt/1708-ps.asp>

promulgated the Nuremberg laws and also used his position to enact anti-Semitic policies. Göring used his jurisdiction under the Four Year Plan to take over Jewish firms and create a process requiring Jews to register their property.¹¹⁶ Not only did this act indicate his anti-Semitism, but it exemplified how Göring accepted the Nuremberg Laws and thought the “Jewish problem” was an economic problem.¹¹⁷ To further explain this, Overy writes:

As the head of the Four Year Plan Goering also acquired powers for taking over Jewish firms into state ownership, a policy carried out to ensure that they be used for ‘national’ purposes, and not for the personal gain of small businessmen. It has sometimes been wrongly assumed that Goering was an opponent of the party’s extreme anti-Semitism, expressed through events like the *Kristallnacht* pogrom in November 1938. Nothing could be further from the truth...He wanted the expropriation of Jewish firms to be carried out systematically under the exclusive control of the Four Year Plan...He accepted the Nuremberg Laws restricting Jewish civil rights. Indeed, as *Reichstag* President, he was closely involved with the passage of the laws”¹¹⁸

Göring was concerned that the effects of *Kristallnacht* would cause damage to the economy via insurance claims; so instead, he got approval from Hitler to implement a state program to confiscate Jewish property rather than allowing the public to take matters into their own hands.¹¹⁹ Göring used his power to create anti-Semitic policies, which blamed financial problems on Jews and took advantage of them for Party reasons. Similarly, Funk was labeled “The Banker of Gold Teeth” by American Nuremberg prosecutor Robert Jackson, because it was Funk who often commanded the theft of all Jewish gold, whether items, jewelry, or teeth. Funk was the *Reichstag* chairman of the Committee on Economic Policy in December 1932, although he did not hold the position for very long. After the Nazi Party came to power, he stepped down from his *Reichstag* position and became Chief Press Officer of the Third Reich. In 1933, Funk was

¹¹⁶ Overy, 61; 253.

¹¹⁷ Overy, 61-62.

¹¹⁸ Overy, 61.

¹¹⁹ Overy, 62.

appointed as a State Secretary at the Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda. In 1938, he assumed the title of Chief Plenipotentiary for Economics, replacing Schacht, although his position was more of a cover for Göring's control.¹²⁰

In 1933, Darré also excised his position to create racist laws, when he passed the *Reichserbhofgesetz*, The State Heredity Farm Law. This socio-economic law made tangible the blood and soil ideology—it stated that familial dedication to the farm land would support the state for multiple reasons: it preserves the culture as long as the owners are Nordic and not Jewish or people of color, it controls the rural population growth (decreasing it), it reduces state financial fees by eliminating mortgages, and it ties heirs to the land.¹²¹ This law pushed a racist ideology under the cover of nationalism.

Primer Analysis

The Nazi Youth Primer seems mostly to focus on elements of the Four Year Plan, emphasizing nationalism and the economic recovery of Germany post the Treaty of Versailles, rather than publicizing their racist beliefs and their agenda for war preparation. The Primer explains how Nazi agricultural ideology was attacked and foreign financial ideas permeated the German economy as an effect of World War I.¹²² Some of the ideologies being alluded to here are the more capitalist theories of economists that aligned more closely with Schacht and his goal of stabilizing the German economy post-WWI. Both Schacht and Goerdeler wanted to enact a free-market economy, a methodology to which the Primer is opposed. The Primer says, “Ideas

¹²⁰ Overy, 71.

¹²¹ JK Galbraith, "Hereditary Land in the Third Reich." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 53, no. 3 (1939): 465-76, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1884418.lmj>

¹²² Brennecke, 102.

foreign to our people spread among German economic leaders and took away from our working forces a consciousness of the national basis of their work.”¹²³ Here it shows the debate between a free-market and liberal economy compared to a nationalistic command economy, to which it is clearly taking preference to the latter. In the same paragraph it says that World War I caused a loss of “the love of homeland;” this further illustrates the Primer’s primary goal of indoctrinating nationalism.¹²⁴ From there it continues stating other negative effects of the First World War and the Treaty of Versailles, specifically stressing the starvation and lack of natural resources as result of losing their colonies and lands. Despite addressing the problems Schacht is trying to fix, it is clear the Primer aligns more with Göring and his followers and their agenda of nationalism.

The Primer argues that after World War I, the German economy became problematically more dependent on foreign countries. This issue aligns with Hitler’s demands to be self-sufficient, and while both Schacht’s New Plan and Göring’s Four Year Plan aim to make Germany self-sufficient, Schacht’s plan centers on controlling foreign trade, while Göring’s focuses on increasing agricultural production. The Primer argues that *autarky* must be achieved, because as they learned from World War I, depending on imports from other countries will lead to starvation and malnutrition; so, Germany has learned that they must be able to feed their own people by using food produced within Germany itself.¹²⁵ While the Primer recognizes that it is not healthy to be dependent on imports, it does not dive into the economical detriments of international trade; instead, it indicates how Germany can take agricultural measures to achieve self-sufficiency. One such way it mentions is through the use of hereditary farms—it increases

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ Brennecke, 219-220.

production and home and gives these honored farmers a tax break for their service, which was Darré's Hereditary Farm Law and Reinhardt's tax policy.¹²⁶ Additionally the Primer says it will increase effectiveness of farming by "first, enlarging agriculturally usable areas; second, increasing the productivity of existing farms; third, reducing waste and destruction of agricultural products; and finally, cultivating needed product which have up to this time not been produced at all, or not in sufficient quantities."¹²⁷ This reflects Darré's policy of land reclamation and consolidation for hereditary farms.

The Primer also discusses the agricultural demands that need to be met. It argues that since Germany lost its colonies, it is in desperate need to produce its own textiles. This aligns with the program that Keppler was overseeing. Just as aforementioned, the Primer also writes that despite the increase in production in some areas, fats were still in demand.¹²⁸ The Primer addresses the problem of raw materials, explaining, "so far as plant and animal raw stuffs are concerned, Germany has no domestic production... attempts are now being made to increase the production of these raw materials also, although agricultural land must be used primarily to insure German independence in food."¹²⁹ This section reflects Göring's Four Year Plan. Additionally, it expands on this further, discussing how the lack of raw materials affected textiles, which was over seen by Keppler.¹³⁰ It suggests the development of synthetic fibers (Keppler's program) to further production.¹³¹ The Primer blames this lack of raw materials problem on the loss of African colonies due to the treaty of Versailles and "the Jewish boycott

¹²⁶ Brennecke, 222-223.

¹²⁷ Brennecke, 224.

¹²⁸ Brennecke, 231.

¹²⁹ Brennecke, 241-242.

¹³⁰ Brennecke, 242.

¹³¹ Brennecke, 251.

game,” which is the only mention of Jews in this chapter of the Primer, despite the many racist aspects of the aforementioned ideologies.¹³²

In an earlier chapter of the Primer, it states how Jews tried to dominate the economy, which needed to be combatted by the Nazi party in order to restore economic order. Specifically, the Primer says that international Jews took advantage of the German economic collapse to dominate the financial sphere.¹³³ Similar to how Göring’s Four Year Plan took over Jewish firms, Nazi economists Goerdeler, Reinhardt, Krosigk, Funk, and Darré preached anti-Semitic fiscal policies as well, from taking Jewish land to taking Jews’ gold teeth. The Primer mentions the Four Year Plan, stating that it will increase domestic production, specifically through measure such as land reclamation and cultivation, reducing the price of fertilizer, creating larger hereditary farms, adjusting the prices of different items on the market, and providing government aid.¹³⁴

As evidenced, the Nazi economists whose theories and policies were most featured in the Primer were of those who were outwardly racist; however, the Primer excluded the racist elements of their ideologies, instead focusing on the nationalistic elements. Additionally, The Four Year Plan and similar theorists are recognized by the Primer, while Schacht, his New Plan, and those dedicated to restoring the German economy and helping the people are excluded. The Primer avoids mentioning rearmament (and thus war), as well as the racist actions being taken against Jews; this affirms the willingly blind writing of the Primer. Instead of propagandizing the racist elements of National Socialism, it instead continues to push the agenda of nationalism, end

¹³² Brennecke, 244-247.

¹³³ Brennecke, 103.

¹³⁴ Brennecke, 232.

the Primer with the motto, “German Work out of German Raw Materials.”¹³⁵ It emphasizes the sacrifice of the individual for the survival and success of the state.

Chapter 3: Nazi Demography

Population Policies (*Bevölkerungspolitik*)

In Nazi Germany, population policies were meant to improve both the birth rate of the German people and their eugenic purity. This division often translated into policies for racist reasons and policies for economic reasons. The agenda to increase the population mostly focused on increasing the number of births in order to guarantee the longevity of the *Volk*. This was addressed in a few ways, such as increasing marriages and recognizes families with many children.

The Aim to Increase the Birth Rate

Population policies focused on increasing the population in order to better improve the economy. After World War I, there was a significant decrease in population, hitting Germany’s lowest rate ever.¹³⁶ This was influenced by the economic problems Germany faced, including a high rate of unemployment and a lack of food, specifically fats.¹³⁷ In order to combat this, policies were put in place after 1933 to ban abortion and to reward families with a high number of children through marriage loans and family allowances and grants.¹³⁸ Not only would this help

¹³⁵ Brennecke, 255.

¹³⁶ D.V. Glass, *The Struggle for Population*, (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1936), 17.

¹³⁷ Jörg Baten and Andrea Wagner, “Autarchy, market disintegration, and health: the mortality and nutritional crisis in Nazi Germany, 1933-1937,” *Economics and Human Biology*, 2003 Jan; 1(1):1-28 (Bethesda, MD: US National Library of Medicine National Institutes of Health, 2003), 6.

¹³⁸ Conrad Taeuber and Irene B. Taeuber, “German Fertility Trends, 1933-39,” *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 46, no. 2, Sept. 1940, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1940), 153-154.

guarantee the continuation of a future German people, but many also believed it would help with the current economic situation. By increasing the number of children, there would be an increase in the demand for food. This demand for food would require more agricultural production, which would in turn increase employment.¹³⁹ In addition, marriage loans were created in order to encourage the increase in children, specifically those born into a married couple. Marriage loans were supposed to encourage young people to have more children, because a major problem with the decreasing rate in the past was not having enough finances to support a family. While the birth rate did go up during this time, it is quite likely that this was due to the recovery of the German economy rather than specifically due to marriage loans.¹⁴⁰ The law to distribute marriage loans passed in July 1933, granting on average an interest-free loan of 600 *Reichsmarks* to young couples “of ‘Nordic’ ancestry, i.e., with no Jewish grandparents, who were ‘desirable citizens,’ and who were eugenically fit”.¹⁴¹ In the early years, in order to combat unemployment, the marriage loans first required eligible women to leave the job market, giving more opportunities for men, until the loan was repaid (unless the husband made less than \$30,000).¹⁴² British historian, Tim Mason, explains the how the marriage loan was one of the few successful methods to increase the German birth rate:

A clause under which the sum to be repaid was cut by one quarter for every child born to the couple...it was asserted that couples who received marriage loans had on average twice as many children as those who did not qualify....the marriage loans constituted the only significant exception to the general rule that financial incentives (or disincentives) had no demonstrable effect upon the birth-rate in Europe in the inter-war year.”¹⁴³

¹³⁹ Brennecke, 95.

¹⁴⁰ Clifford Kirkpatrick, *Nazi Germany: Its Women and Family Life*, (Indianapolis, ID: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1938), 166-168.

¹⁴¹ Taeuber, 153; Tim Mason, “Women in Germany, 1925-1940: Family, Welfare and Work. Part I,” *History Workshop*, No. 1 (Spring, 1976), (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), 95.

¹⁴² *Ibid*; Kirkpatrick, 166-168.

¹⁴³ Mason, 95.

The marriage loan was successful in helping to combat unemployment and increasing the population by taking women out of the workforce, encouraging eugenically approved marriages, and inciting procreation of these eugenically qualified couples.

Friedrich Burgdörfer was a Nazi demographer who studied the birth rate. One of his plans to address the population decline was to redo the taxation system based on how many children a family had. The tax break would encourage families to have more children and encourage childless couples or individuals to marry and start a family. “In general, those without children would pay into the fund, those with two children would neither pay nor receive, while families with more children would receive subsidies in proportion to the number of offspring.”¹⁴⁴ Another way to encourage families to have many children was the party godchildren program, in which healthy Aryan families that were loyal to National Socialism and had “nine living legitimate children or seven living sons...; Children of such families might be accepted by German leaders as godchildren and receive gifts made according to estimated need.”¹⁴⁵ This practice offered economic aid, while also pushing a nationalist agenda. According to Kirkpatrick, by the end of September 1936, Hitler had 12,620 godchildren, and Hindenburg had an impressive 27,000 godchildren.¹⁴⁶ Considering Party godchildren had to be of Aryan race, this program addressed both eugenic and birth rate population concerns.

The Eugenic Aims of Population Policies

Population policies to address eugenic concerns focused not solely on the birth rate, but more pointedly on the race and health of the population. These policies were much more

¹⁴⁴ Kirkpatrick, 158.

¹⁴⁵ Kirkpatrick, 156.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

prejudicial, specifically towards Jews, the disabled, and so-called “asocials.” Burgdörfer’s book, *Volk ohne Jugend*, described a prevalent fear in the 1930s—that the German people would one day go extinct (*Volkstod* or “national death”).¹⁴⁷ This fear came from his statistical studies, which he conducted before the Nazi party came into power:

When in 1929, Dr. Burgdörfer, the Director of the German Statistical Office, published his book, *Der Geburtenrückgang und seine Bekämpfung*, it was to point out that fertility had dropped to so great an extent that the German nation was no longer able to maintain its numbers. Expressing the position in Dr. Burgdörfer’s terms, after 1925 the annual excess of births over deaths hid what was really a shortage of births.¹⁴⁸

He collected racial data through the facilitation of the racial censuses for 1933 and 1939, particularly to find Jewish genealogy.¹⁴⁹ In order to address Burgdörfer’s findings and projections, new committees and policies were formed. For example, Burgdörfer was one of the Nazis who took part in the *Expert Committee on Questions of Population and Race Policy*, which developed race policies in response to the population crisis.¹⁵⁰

Out of this came the Sterilization Law to guarantee the health of the Aryan race and German population; as mentioned in the previous chapter, Frick approved of the sterilization law in order to keep the unfit (the disabled, alcoholics, epileptics, etc.) from reproducing.¹⁵¹ “Sterilization” was one of the ways policy makers and government officials saw fit to control the eugenic quality of the population.¹⁵² Another development to address the population crisis was enacted with a law in 1934 to create national health offices that looked for candidates for sterilization in addition to a number of other duties; additionally, it created eugenic clinics that

¹⁴⁷Alan E. Steinweis, *Studying the Jew: Scholarly Antisemitism in Nazi Germany*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 125.

¹⁴⁸ Glass, 16-17.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ Proctor, 95-96.

¹⁵¹ Kirkpatrick, 183-184.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

tested people in order to approve the “quality” of reproduction. These eugenics clinics often prevented Jews and Aryans from marrying and thus procreating (the following year the Nuremberg Laws would be written, making not only marriage between a Jew and Aryan illegal, but even sexual intercourse between a Jew and a “quarter-Jew” illegal as well, recognizing the that the “quarter-Jew” was mostly Aryan).¹⁵³ Candidates for hereditary estates (*Erbhöfe*) needed to be cleared by the eugenic clinics in order to qualify; similarly, one also needed eugenic clearance to apply for marriage loans and entry into the *League of Large Families*.¹⁵⁴

The *League of Large Families* existed to encourage reproduction for national regeneration; Kirkpatrick writes, “This organization existed before the seizure of power but has been built up from 40,000 members in 1933 to 300,000 families, in spite of the fact that 80,000 families were excluded for not meeting the established eugenic standards.”¹⁵⁵ This is an example of how the Nazi state used propaganda to address the birth rate issue. Even if eugenic population politics slightly hindered the quantitative population aims, “a significant increase in German fertility under the leadership of National Socialism is indisputable.”¹⁵⁶

Primer Analysis of Population Policy Aims

The Primer’s section on population policy affirms that the state is working towards “a quantitative as well as a qualitative increase in population.”¹⁵⁷ Although the Primer begins the discussion of population by arguing there needs to be a change in both “the quantity and quality” of the population, it mostly discusses the “quantitative” agenda, albeit in a nationalist light. The

¹⁵³ Kirkpatrick, 180.

¹⁵⁴ Kirkpatrick, 195-197.

¹⁵⁵ Kirkpatrick, 155.

¹⁵⁶ Kirkpatrick, 164,

¹⁵⁷ Brennecke, 84.

Primer states that, “wiping out of the less worthy and selection of the best are the means for rising and maintaining the racial values of our people. Selection, however, is possible only when a sufficiently large number of persons is at hand.” This quote best articulates the Nazi ideology to increase both the “quality” and the quantity of the German population. This section of the Primer addresses the problem with the German growth rate and the need to increase the number of births per year, or else their people may face extinction.¹⁵⁸

Despite many population policies surrounding eugenic (and often explicitly racist) ideologies, the Party chose to mostly exclude that side in the Primer, instead focusing on the “quantitative” agenda; specifically, the Primer discusses how the freedoms of the Weimar period encouraged people to have fewer children, hence the drop in birth rates. It argues that it was irresponsible of the *Volk* to put personal and superficial desires ahead of the state economy. The Primer further explains despite popular belief, increase in population is actually beneficial to the economy: “A large number of children consume much more than a smaller number. It gives all callings more work and bread for that reason. The production of goods rises and with it the well-being also.”¹⁵⁹

The Primer explains the core problem, essentially referencing Burgdörfer’s findings, stating, “If the number of births exceeds the number of deaths, a real population growth occurs; if the reverse takes place, a people is threatened with death.”¹⁶⁰ The Primer supports this with statistics that seem to parallel those found by Burgdörfer; for example, both specifically state that the death figure sank to 10.8 in 1933.¹⁶¹ These references to Burgdörfer’s censuses show that the

¹⁵⁸ Brennecke, 85-87.

¹⁵⁹ Brennecke, 94-95.

¹⁶⁰ Brennecke, 85.

¹⁶¹ Brennecke, 87; Glass, 17.

Primer mostly focused on the quantitative aspect of his studies, choosing to avoid his many racist conclusions about population depletion and solutions.

The Primer also discusses some of the national measures taken to increase the population, although it focuses on the nationalist aims of them rather than the racial aims. For example, the Primer discusses the *National League of Large Families* and that membership in it was an honorable distinction.¹⁶² While the *League* had eugenic requirements and was hence racist, the Party chooses to downplay the racial elements of the organization in the Primer. Additionally, it shares the successes in how lowering taxes for large families and granting marriage loans helped increase the number of births.¹⁶³ Although many of these initiatives were based around eugenics, the Primer only dedicates a few sentences to the effects of race on the population; it says how “the racial structure of peoples” determines a community’s culture, economy, political leadership, state structure, and historical accomplishments.¹⁶⁴

Territory

The Treaty of Versailles changed the map of the world. Germany, specifically, lost a number of lands, both in Europe and colonial Africa. Many Nazi ideologues were greatly outraged at this and therefore, began to develop ideas to reclaim the lands. Additionally, with the expected boost in population post-economic recession, there was a concern that more land was needed for the *Volk*. In terms of European lands, there were two parts of the conversation—reclaiming historically cultural German lands and expelling Jews and Slavs from the current German lands. In regards to the colonies, the Nazi regime argued they were unfairly taken away,

¹⁶² Brennecke, 96.

¹⁶³ Brennecke, 97.

¹⁶⁴ Brennecke, 99-100.

especially as they were needed for raw materials and space for the aforementioned growing population. While there was clearly a racial element to both parts (concerning the Jews and the Slavs in Europe and the Africans in the former colonies of Burundi, Cameroon, Namibia, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Togo), many propagandists chose to whitewash these policies; Germans most likely knew the realities of this, but they were often willingly blind in order to repeat the benefits (raw materials and increase in land availability and better soil).

European Geopolitics

According to Barnes and Minca, there were two main aspects of Nazi geopolitics: deterritorialization and reterritorialization. “Deterritorialization involved moving non-Germanized Germans (mainly Jews and Slavs) off conquered Eastern lands to create an “empty space” that was then “reterritorialized” by the settlement of “legitimate” Germans (although often not German citizens).”¹⁶⁵ Carl Schmitt, a Nazi geopolitics theorist and jurist, focused his writings and policies mostly on deterritorialization. In contrast, Walter Christaller, a Nazi geographer focused his geopolitical theories around reterritorialization.

Schmitt’s major contribution to Nazi geopolitics was the idea of *Großraum* (greater space). *Großraum* included an expansion of territorial space, as well as an expansion of Germany’s sphere of influence.¹⁶⁶ In order to achieve *Großraum*, first they carried out *Entfernung*. “*Entfernung* means expulsion, removal, or just distance. Set against Nazi racial politics, *Entfernung* implied geographical purification, a space made into the isotropic plain of ethnic homogeneity.”¹⁶⁷ The goal of this concept was to create empty space in the east to which

¹⁶⁵ Trevor J. Barnes & Claudio Minca, “Nazi Spatial Theory: The Dark Geographies of Carl Schmitt and Walter Christaller,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, (London: Routledge, 2012), 1.

¹⁶⁶ Barnes and Minca, 8.

¹⁶⁷ Barnes and Minca, 4.

the Germans could move; this process mostly forced Jews and Slavs out of German-occupied land, beginning “in the 1930s with pogroms, of which Kristallnacht was the best known. By 1940 it had become materialized as forced marches and ghettoization...From June 1941 it became the Final Solution.”¹⁶⁸ The goal of this type of purification was that the lands would become *judenfrei*, or the process of making an area “Jew-free.” The goal of *Entfernung* (and in to an extent *judenfrei*) was to create *Lebensraum*, or living-space for the Aryan race. The term *Lebensraum* was actually coined before the Nazi era, in 1897, by German geographer, Friedrich Ratzel.¹⁶⁹ Even from the beginning, however, *Lebensraum* was linked to radical agrarianism and cultural (eventually racial) divides.¹⁷⁰ This process of deterritorialization was then followed by reterritorialization.

Walter Christaller’s “central place theory re-created the Nazis’ territorial conquests in the geographical likeness of the German homeland.”¹⁷¹ This theory was used to legitimize Nazi ideology that wanted to reclaim historically German lands. While Christaller’s theory was used mostly in a nationalist way (unlike Schmitt’s *Entfernung*), “the real and imagined geometries of central place theory represented a key element in the final integration of a *judenfrei*...an integration in which only a limited number of the Poles were included after being ‘Germanized.’”¹⁷²

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁹ Alexandros Stogiannos, *The Genesis of Geopolitics and Friedrich Ratzel*, (Berlin: Springer, 2018), 59.

¹⁷⁰ Woodruff D. Smith, *The Ideological Origins of Nazi Imperialism*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 83 and 151.

¹⁷¹ Barnes and Minca, 2.

¹⁷² Barnes and Minca, 13.

Like Christaller, Haushofer's writings focused on reterritorialization. Karl Haushofer is best known as "the Father of Geopolitics."¹⁷³ Haushofer was the editor of *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik (Journal of Geopolitics)* and a professor of geopolitics at the University of Munich.¹⁷⁴ According to Natter, "German geopolitics was fundamentally a form of pseudo-scientific intellectual activity distinct from geography proper which was used to justify Nazi expansion, imperialism, and, ultimately, genocide."¹⁷⁵ Although Haushofer was not a member of the National Socialists and his wife was half-Jewish, his beliefs aligned with the Nazis in regards to "the demand for restitution of German territories 'robbed' by the Versailles treaty, the demand that Germany be returned to full sovereignty as a nation alongside all others, and the demand that Germany be accorded sufficient *Lebensraum* (living-space) to support its population."¹⁷⁶ In Haushofer's book, *Contemporary World Politics*, "geopolitics was offered as a weapon to combat the geographical error produced by Versailles."¹⁷⁷ Haushofer wrote about the need to retake lands, especially the "folk" soils, which included Poland, the Sudetenland, Austria, Alsace-Lorraine, and Denmark.¹⁷⁸ Another of Haushofer's writings indicates that geopolitics is needed "to carry on the fight for Germany's existence—a struggle which is becoming increasingly difficult due to the incongruity between her food production and population density."¹⁷⁹ Similarly, in his second volume of *Mein Kampf*, Hitler writes, "The National Socialist movement must strive to eliminate the disproportion between our population and our

¹⁷³ Wolfgang Natter, "Geopolitics in Germany, 1919-45," *A Companion to Political Geography*, edited by John Agnew, Katharyne Mitchell, and Gerard Toal (Gearóid Ó Tuathail), (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2003), 189.

¹⁷⁴ Natter, 187 and 189.

¹⁷⁵ Natter, 189.

¹⁷⁶ Natter, 190.

¹⁷⁷ Natter, 192.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁹ Karl Haushofer, "'Why Geopolitik?'" from *The World of General Haushofer (1942)*, *The Geopolitics Reader*, edited by Gearóid Ó Tuathail, Simon Dalby, and Paul Routledge, (London: Routledge, 1998), 34.

area—viewing this latter as a source of food as well as a basis for power politics.”¹⁸⁰ This tie between *Lebensraum* and agrarianism reflects Ratzel’s original writings of the term, though he was not as concerned with population at that time. The geographers of the Third Reich, however, were quite concerned with population and the recovery of Germany post-WWI, so their ideologies of how to best use/affect the land reflected that. Despite this superficial claim for more land for the population, there was still an implicit racism in regards to deterritorialization of non-Aryans in preparation for reterritorialization.

Colonialism

The Colonial Political Office, led by Franz Ritter von Epp, was established in 1934. Epp contributed an article to *Germany Speaks*, which was a book sponsored by both the British and German governments in 1938, as mentioned in the previous chapter. In Epp’s article, “The Colonial Problem,” he writes that “Germany was a late-comer in the Colonial sphere” and that she developed colonies not for imperialist motives, but in order to compensate for a lack in raw materials and overpopulation.¹⁸¹ Additionally, Epp argues that “Germany has a proper legal claim to the return of her Colonies.”¹⁸² He claims that this is due to Versailles only making the colonies mandates to other powers...mandates that can be returned. One of Epp’s concluding points is:

the point of cardinal importance, in view of her foreign-exchange position, is that she must be enabled to obtain from territories subject to her own sovereignty, where her own currency circulates, a considerable part of those raw materials and foodstuffs that have now to be paid for in foreign exchange....Germany asks only for the return of territories that were her own property before she had to relinquish possession of them.”¹⁸³

¹⁸⁰ Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1941), 646.

¹⁸¹ Franz Ritter von Epp, “The Colonial Problem,” *Germany Speaks*, (London: Butterworth, 1938), 137.

¹⁸² Epp, 140.

¹⁸³ Epp, 143.

His point emphasizes that the main need for colonies was raw materials and that imperialism was not a goal of Nazi Germany. Townsend explains how 1936 brought a change in how the Reich government addressed colonialism; she writes:

The year 1936-37 marked the complete surrender of the government to colonialism and the projection of an aggressive campaign at home and abroad. A wave of ‘colonial consciousness’ swept the country, both administration and people. Very appropriately, Propaganda Minister Goebbels set the wave in motion in January when opening the election campaign for the Reichstag: ‘The world must recognize that no solution of the great international problems exists except that which der Führer has indicated. . . . We hope for a solution of the colonial problem as well in the not too distant future.... But the time will come when we must demand colonies from the world.’ [Speech reported in *New York Times*, Jan. 17, 1936].¹⁸⁴

Here, Townsend explains how the national policy shifted to fully supporting colonialism.

Although the writers claimed the need for the colonies was to address the problems of overpopulation and lack of raw materials (for seemingly, food or the production of goods), it is highly likely, that in fact, the Nazi government wanted their colonies returned to them to increase their raw material supply in preparation for war. Townsend sums up her article arguing that despite this fervent demand for German colonies, Hitler, and therefore his loyal Nazi party, still prioritized hegemony in Europe over Africa. She concludes, “The conquest of central Europe has begun; the colonies remain.”¹⁸⁵ Despite the difference in prioritization of conquests, the interaction of race and space is prevalent in both.

Primer Analysis of European and Colonial Territories

The Primer discusses both race and space in both European and colonial terms. In keeping with the overarching argument of this thesis, the Primer addresses more of the

¹⁸⁴ Mary E. Townsend, “The German Colonies and the Third Reich,” *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 53, No. 2 (Jun., 1938), pp. 186-206, (New York: The Academy of Political Science, 1938), 197-198.

¹⁸⁵ Townsend, 206.

nationalist perspectives on geography rather than the outwardly racist ideologies and practices that often went into geopolitics in Nazi Germany in order to garner support of geopolitical policies. To this extent, the Primer focuses more on reterritorialization rather than deterritorialization. It starts off stating, “By German territory we mean every region of central Europe which is inhabited by Germans in more or less permanent settlements and has received its cultural imprint from the German people.”¹⁸⁶ This reflects Haushofer’s beliefs about reclaiming lands that are culturally, linguistically, or historically German, while simultaneously ignoring the aspect that these lands are currently inhabited by non-Aryans, such as Jews, Slavs, and Poles. Additionally, the Primer indirectly addresses the Treaty of Versailles, which was the driving force behind all nationalistic claims for reterritorialization, such as Haushofer’s and Schmitt’s; it says, “The German Reich, the political area of the German people, includes only a small part of the Germany territory... Several German states have broken away from the Reich and part of them have become completely estranged from the German people. Moreover some parts of the Reich have been seized by foreign peoples.”¹⁸⁷ This statement implies the land loss as effect of the loss of WWI and the Treaty of Versailles. Additionally, the Primer expresses Germany’s need to expand in order to address the population problem (as addressed by Haushofer and Hitler), explaining, “Since the end of the World War, therefore, the need of our people for territory has increased to an extent which is unendurable. The expression ‘folk without space,’ which was coined during the years following the War, is more applicable to Germans than to any other people in the world.”¹⁸⁸ Here, the Primer speaks only of reterritorialization, glossing over plans of deterritorialization. “Folk without space,” or *Volk ohne*

¹⁸⁶ Brennecke, 105.

¹⁸⁷ Brennecke, 109.

¹⁸⁸ Brennecke, 200.

Raum, was coined by German author after the Treaty of Versailles, but it was popularized in Nazi Germany in conjunction with the *Lebensraum* ideology. However, unlike the more racial solutions, such as deterritorialization and *Lebensraum*, as offered by Schmitt and Haushofer, the Primer instead only states that this problem is being addressed by the German soldiers fighting at the front (implicating their fight for territorial expansion). It states, “Millions of German comrades along the frontiers of the Reich...giving up goods and property, blood and life for the sake of the German population area,” really driving home the idea of devoted nationalism and sacrifice for Germany. This quote attempts to rationalize the invasion of Poland, in order to gain support of their political/militaristic actions, by glorifying the soldiers and telling a narrative that the invasion was necessary to conquer new lands to accommodate the German population.

The Primer discusses the history of German colonization, most significantly, the loss of colonies as an effect of the Treaty of Versailles, and the need to regain the colonies in order to reunify and stabilize Germany. Like Epp, the Primer confirms that Germany had a late start into colonialism.¹⁸⁹ Additionally, the Primer backs up Epp’s claim that Germany did not colonize African countries for imperialistic reasons; rather, the Primer says, “The German colonies were built up by the great sacrifices on the part of the Reich. After profiting from the first experiences, the colonies blossomed forth mightily and soon demonstrated that they were profitable. Their soil was not only moistened with the sweat of German planters and laborers, but watered with the blood of German soldiers.” This excerpt exemplifies how the Primer takes race out of the conversation, and instead, focuses on nationalism. The visualization of the sacrifices of the Nazi soldier and Nazi hereditary farm, two of the most revered populations in Nazi Germany, seems to beckon the reader to sympathize with poor Germany, whose colonies were stripped away from

¹⁸⁹ Brennecke, 163.

her, despite her good caretaking and sacrifice. The chapter further concludes with deploring the Treaty of Versailles—the Primer argues it was unjust, specifically because their colonies were thought extremely successful by both Germans and natives alike.¹⁹⁰ Instead, the Primer makes the argument of the African colonies euro-centric, stating that the colonies were taken away so that other European countries could gain power (as opposed to for the rights of the African peoples). Again, as in the previous debates, this discussion of colonies became whitewashed, despite the tie between policies of race and space. The Primer ends this section with a statement almost identical to Goebbels’s featured above: “The German Reich will at all events never cease to demand the restoration of its colonies.”¹⁹¹ This section of the Primer drives home how the good and bad ideologies are linked—it is almost impossible to have one without the other. There is a consistent presence of outwardly racist ideas and policies, and yet, the Primer, while sometimes acknowledging them, excludes the outwardly racist dialogue from the discussion of eugenics, economics, and population and territory.

Conclusion

The Primer is a case study of Nazi propaganda that demonstrates the Party’s willingness to be ideologically flexible in order to achieve support of Nazi policies, such as the sterilization program, expansion to the east, the Four Year Plan, etc. This thesis showed the differing debates in academia presented in the Primer, which were mostly split between those who were explicitly and stridently racist and those whose racism was cast in the more moderate language of German recovery post-World War I in the areas of racial science and eugenics, economics, and population and territory. As there is only one direct citation in the entire Primer, it is important to

¹⁹⁰ Brennecke, 170.

¹⁹¹ Brennecke, 171.

discover from where the ideas being propagandized are coming. Although the Primer claims early on that its goal is to encourage Hitler Youth to adopt the National Socialist political positions in both ideology and action, by choosing to avoid anti-Semitic language and instead discussing a milder ideology, it is clear that the Primer has an anxiety towards public opinion and is therefore willing to make ideological compromises.¹⁹² Throughout the analysis of the chapters in the Primer, it is clear that the Party was pushing a nationalist agenda, while trying to avoid explicitly discussing the anti-Semitic elements. The first section on racial science pushes an argument of eugenics for a healthier race, while excluding the racist elements of racial science. The section in the Primer on economics similarly pushes more for German recovery within a nationalist dialogue, while again downplaying the anti-Semitic policies of the Nazi government. Finally, the sections on population and territory build on this a bit more—while the writing is still not explicitly anti-Semitic, the Primer does imply racist policies, although they are white washed, encouraging the readers to be willingly blind to anti-Semitism.

One might assume the Primer would contain aggressive and outwardly anti-Semitic ideologies; however, as discussed in the previous chapters, the Primer appears to push an ideology that was more reserved. In the first chapter, for example, the Primer mentioned the arguments of eugenicists more than those of the racial scientists. For example, it referenced Lenz and Rudin's ideologies of sterilization to combat hereditary diseases, arguing that biological eugenics was necessary to preserve the health of the German population. In contrast, if it had discussed Ploetz and Vershuer, both of whom explicitly mentioned Jews (although Ploetz's writings on Jews were not anti-Semitic), it would have told a narrative that clearly addressed race at the forefront. Instead, the Primer picked the arguments of Baur, Lenz, and Rüdin, who did not

¹⁹² Brennecke, 4.

focus their arguments on race. This is significant, because in regards to the more racist Nazi academics, the Primer chose to either avoid them completely or, in the case of Günther, reference solely the elements that helped strengthened their nationalist narrative, while excluding the parts of their writings that were outwardly racist. The Primer eliminated the outwardly racist arguments from the dialogue, because it would have been easier for the general public and students of the Hitler Youth to accept ideologies that were not explicitly racist.

The economics section of the Primer unfolds a bit differently than the one on eugenics. In the debate between rearmament and recovery, the Primer chooses recovery but through a discussion of policies that fell under Göring's Four-Year Plan, which was best associated with rearmament. It places heavy emphasis on the need to recover economically after the effects of the treaty of Versailles, yet it lacks an argument for the need of rearmament. However, rather than fully aligning itself with Schacht, the Primer excludes the racial and martial elements of Göring's Four Year Plan. For example, the Primer dwells on the need to be self-sufficient but says that the solution to that is agricultural (like Göring) not commercial (Schacht). The Primer starts to reveal the true nature of Nazism by referencing real policies, even though they are framed within a nationalist narrative. For example, plans for control of agriculture by loyal (i.e. Aryan) families as a way to make up for the loss of colonies is really a hidden example of the *Hereditary Farm* program, which allowed Aryan families to become agricultural conglomerates.

The third section within the Primer adjusts the narrative towards a discussion of population and land. It emphasizes the fear of the dropping birthrate and the detrimental effects from the loss of German colonies in Africa, as an effect of the Treaty of Versailles. The Primer describes the discussion of population as being shaped by both "quantitative" demographics and "qualitative" demographics: "Fostering heredity and population policy obviously work hand in

hand to produce a quantitative as well as qualitative increase in population.”¹⁹³ Despite this upfront statement of the importance of “quantity” and “quality” to the Nazi Party, the Primer mostly downplays the eugenic aspects and focuses instead of the quantitative aspects of population policy. While the language in the Primer mostly centers on increasing the population through the discussion of marriage licenses, hereditary farms, and the *League for Large Families*, it actually implies racist demographic policies, which required eugenic screening for all of the aforementioned benefits. Similarly, in the two-fold discussion of deterritorialization and reterritorialization land policies, the Primer argues that Germany needs her colonies returned for raw materials and to accommodate the population growth—by focusing solely on the nation’s needs, it whitewashes the policies of German colonialism, ignoring the fact that Germany use of African resources and lands takes those things away from the people who live in those countries. Additionally, within the other side of the conversation focused on eastern expansion, the Primer states that *Lebensraum* policies are in place to unite Germanic peoples and culture in addition to, again, accommodating the expected growth in population as Germany recovers. The Primer chooses to avoid explicit language that indicates the forced removal of Jews, Slavs, and other minorities from the eastern lands, instead pushing a nationalist policy of *Lebensraum*/ reterritorialization, which implies racist policies, such as deterritorialization that must come first. This chapter, like the two previous, follows the thesis that the Primer is an example of Nazi propaganda that was ideologically flexible in order to garner support of Nazi policies, including those that were in fact anti-Semitic, despite the deception of language.

In the greater picture of Nazi Germany, this willingness of the Nazi party to be ideologically flexible suggests that the Third Reich government was not quite as totalitarian as

¹⁹³ Brennecke, 84.

one might think. The fact that the Nazi Party was willing to make compromises in terms of ideology by refraining from using explicitly racist language shows a weakness of the Party. It is possible that the Nazi Party would be willing to make this sacrifice, because their aim may not have been to indoctrinate a nation into becoming anti-Semitic soldiers; instead, perhaps they aimed for a more modest goal of political support. While the government may have hoped that someday German individuals would hold the same beliefs as the Nazi government, they seemed to be satisfied that an individual might hold different values, so long as they loyally supported government policies in regards to eugenics, economics, and population and territory.

This thesis contributes to debate on Nazi propaganda by exploring the theory that if even in the Hitler Youth there was a more modest goal for propaganda, perhaps our understanding of a totalitarian society has to change. If the Nazi government chose to indoctrinate Hitler Youth with a less outwardly racist motivation, this reveals the anxieties they had about their own German people—that not everyone was on board with Nazi ideology, especially the more aggressive elements. Though children are much more susceptible to indoctrination, this analysis of the Nazi Youth Primer suggests that the Party thought they would have to carefully select more nationalist rather than racist teachings in order to convince even children in the Hitler Youth that the policies their government enacted were worth supporting. In terms of this argument between state and individual beliefs, it must be clarified that even if German citizens were not anti-Semitic in the same sense as some academics or the Nazi state, there was still support for a broader sense of eugenics and nationalism that was very close to anti-Semitism that could be used to support the same policies. So, one must not jump to conclusions and forgive the Germans for supporting these policies. For, while Germans could be critical about the more overt aspects of Nazi anti-Semitism, a milder form of racism could still result in the same policies.

History should be used to inform current and future political decisions, so this thesis should be seen as a warning for today. People who do not hold radical beliefs as a core of their ideological values may still support racist or aggressive policies, because they believe in a milder version of a platform. Knowing this, political parties may pick and choose from researchers and academics' theories in order to sell the story they need most. But as the example of the Third Reich shows, complacency can lead to violence. For even if it is possible to formulate racial policies in the more positive language of nationalism, we should realize that the effect is still very much the same.

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