The First World War, whose outbreak was greeted with the same patriotic enthusiasm by European Jews as by Gentiles, was to be the prelude to the gruesome implementation of racist policy in Europe. The theory of racism had already penetrated important groups and made its impact upon the popular consciousness. But it was the war and its aftermath that would transform the theory into practice. As the principal minority in Europe, the Jews had already become the foil of racist thought; now, because of the war and the revolutions which followed, their visibility was accentuated and they became isolated and easily victimized. Indeed, the very violence which continued from the war into the postwar world provided another prerequisite for the triumph of racism. The history that we have unfolded so far now approaches its climax.

The attitudes springing from the war itself, and from the postwar chaos, as well as from the revolutions of 1918–20, all set the stage for the future. In general, the war encouraged longings for camaraderie, activism, and heroism within the nationalistic mystique. Nationalism was strengthened whatever its traditions or aims, whether to win victory against the enemy or to achieve national liberation. The national unity proclaimed in all nations at the outbreak of war, however, was often dissolved even while the war itself was in progress—through accusations of cowardice against Jews, or by tensions between competing groups fighting for national lib-
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eration in eastern Europe. Finally, the fact of mass death added to the consequences of the war a certain brutalization of the European conscience, which also pointed to the future. None of these results of the war were necessarily racist; but all of them would be subject to racist penetration once the time was ripe.

The internal unity which had been evoked at the outbreak of the First World War was broken most ominously in Germany. The statistics about Jewish participation in the armed forces that the high command collected on October 11, 1916, came as a deep shock to German Jewry, which had regarded the war as completing their process of assimilation. The army asserted that it had received complaints that Jews were either being freed from armed service or were evading it in order to find safe positions behind the front. Perhaps this collection of statistics was a part of General Erich Ludendorff's proposal for a more general mobilization; but there were also anti-liberal and anti-Semitic forces at work in the high command who, like Ludendorff's closest adviser, Max Bauer, believed in secret international conspiracies. While the army refused to let known anti-Semites see the statistics, Jewish organizations themselves welcomed this head count, which would disprove unfounded accusations against their members. The Jews were made highly visible in the midst of the war, singled out from the rest of the population. Their patriotism alone was questioned and, whatever the motive, this fitted in nicely with the prevailing stereotype. Nothing like the "Jew-count" occurred in other warring nations. Already Germany was moving to the fore in questioning Jewish emancipation and assimilation.

More important in the long run were those basic ideals of activism, heroism, and camaraderie that were so strengthened by the war. Harmsless though these might have been alone, in the context of the war and the postwar world they were easily annexed by racism. Trench warfare gave a new impetus to such attitudes, in a way of fighting that had no precedent. For those in the front lines the war was a total experience: always facing the enemy and under constant fire.

Such warfare emphasized the sense of camaraderie of those who

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spent days and nights together in the damp trenches; it also glorified that elite of soldiers who led the onslaught upon the enemy, for such storm troopers (as they were called) jumped over the tops of their trenches right into the murderous fire of the enemy. The call for camaraderie—that "overcoming of self," as the future leader of the French veterans, François de La Rocque, put it—was to echo long after the war was over, and everywhere it spelled opposition to liberal democracy as complacent and unthinking. Hand in hand with this call went a glorification of the "glory" of the battlefield. In Italy, too, Gabriele d'Annunzio exalted the symbol of the "black flame" as the emblem of the Italian storm troopers. This flame symbolized personal and national regeneration, and heroic passion exemplified by the storm troopers as opposed to modern degeneracy.

The warriors who symbolized camaraderie and the heroic reflected these virtues in their outward appearance as well. The First World War strengthened the stereotype whose growth we have analyzed ever since the eighteenth century and whose inner worth was expressed through its appearance. Otto Braun, killed during the war, whose letters from the German front, From the Legacy of a Prodigy (Aus Nachgelassenen Schriften Eines Fruhwildeneten, 1921), went through many editions, praised the "manly beauty" which this "age of steel" had produced. By manly beauty he meant a strictly classical form. And such ideas were not confined to Germany. In England, much of the war literature paired the manly beauty of soldiers with blondness and classical form, as in the popular legend that enshrined the poet Rupert Brooke (also killed early in the war) as "A young Apollo, golden-haired"—to quote a part of Frances Cornford's epigram. The "general sunniness" of the stereotype was emphasized during the war by writers most of whom were not racists but who sought in the male society of the trenches living symbols of a genuine community, of human beauty and of sacrifice. All over Europe the need to cope with the war experience tended to emphasize this stereotype, even if in France the blondness was absent, or in Italy the stress was on the spirit of the war rather than the appearance of the heroes. Postwar racism surely
benefited from the reemphasis upon this human ideal-type, especially in nations where many still saw themselves at war in their fight for social change and their struggle against national humiliation.

Germany was therefore not the only country where the war deepened these myths and propelled them into the postwar world to the confusion of liberals and parliamentarians. But it was Ernst Jünger in Germany who became their most celebrated theoretician, elevating battle to man’s innermost experience, capable of producing a new race of heroes. “This was a totally new race, energy itself and filled with élan. Supple, thin and muscular bodies, distinguished faces with eyes which have seen thousands of horrors. These were men who overcame, men of steel...” Here the term “race” was used as a literary flourish; still, such a new “race”—whether in Germany, France, England or elsewhere—was thought to be the finest expression of the national will. The putative enemies of these nations were a lower species: revolutionaries, Freemasons, and, as often as not, Jews.

The exaltation of cameraderie, heroism, and a new race of men was surrounded by mass death on a scale never witnessed before, and this fact had to be confronted. The result was a certain brutalization of conscience, which derived not only from the acceptance of the inevitable but also from attempts to come to terms with such carnage by glorifying it. Death in war was said to give new meaning to life—to cement further the bonds of comradeship between those who had rejected the trivialities of daily existence in order to experience the ultimate sacrifice. The passion of Christ himself was invoked to describe death in war as an imitatio Christi—the end of life on the battlefield would be followed by resurrection.

Germany, which faced defeat, emphasized in a special way that soldiers never die but, resurrected, continue to fight not only in Valhalla but in every patriot’s heart. The patriots were exhorted not to give in to defeat, but to fight on until the nation itself had been resurrected. This argument is best summed up in the introduction to a book which described the 750 shrines of honor to the war dead built during the German republic. The book asserted that the dead...
government of the new republic. The “black rape of Germany” might bring the defeated nation badly needed sympathy abroad. Even the basically decent Social Democratic leader Hermann Müller exclaimed with indignation that “Senegalese Negroes” were profaning the University of Frankfurt and the Goethe House. It was against blacks, not Jews, that the ominous accusation of “Kultur- schande” (rape of culture) was first raised after the war.

Racial fears were immediately linked to sexual anxieties, a common enough combination, but now increasing emphasized because blacks were traditionally thought to be more potent than whites. The journalist Alfred Brie wrote in 1921 with much embroidery about raped German women, describing how the colored French went on the rampage in occupied territory. Novels appeared on the same theme, among them The Black Insult, a Novel of Ravished Germany (Die Schwarze Schmach, der Roman des Geschändeten Deutschland), published in 1922 with a preface by Count Ernst von Reventlow, one of the earliest Nazi supporters. The memory of this occupation would persist, for in 1940 a Nazi tract looked back when it opposed the entry of blacks into European culture. The Jews were not forgotten; they were accused, together with the French, of being responsible for the occupation and for waging a “Negro-Jewish war” upon the Germans. Black troops never reappeared in Germany, for in the Ruhr occupation of 1923 to 1924 the French were careful not to use them; the fuss had been too great and too effective in winning sympathy for Germany in countries like the United States.

Nevertheless, racism was in reality directed more against the Jews than the black soldiers. The French and Belgian occupation stoked the fires, but the heat was easily transferred from such troops to the traditional foils of European racism. If blacks ravished German women in pamphlets and novels during the occupation, Arthur Dinter’s Die Sünde wider das Blut (The Sin Against the Blood, 1918) had transmitted a more typical message, and it sold in the hundreds thousands. The novel told of the violation of a German woman’s racial purity by a rich Jew (cf. Plate 7), and even though she left him to marry an Aryan, her offspring continued to resemble...
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and his father in a Munich beerhall in 1921 were typical of the times: "the past, the war, revolution, the Jews, harassment of offi-
cers, the reds, liberation."14 Heinrich Himmler’s diary records an
association of ideas which served a newly invigorated right. Men
like the young Himmler joined militant groups which fought for
liberation as they understood it—against reds and Jews, for the
fatherland.

A radicalized right was born in the wake of the war and revolu-
tion. Central and eastern Europe were its home; for western Europe
had not experienced the same cycle of defeat and upheaval. Only
now did this region of Europe become more receptive to racism
than the West. Earlier, from the standpoint of 1914 (as we saw), it
might well have been France that would transform racist theory
into practice. After 1918 it was Germany which proved most re-
ceptive to racism, while Austria and eastern Europe were involved
as well. The Jews had become visible here as they were not in
France or England during the early postwar years.

The Jews were not merely accused of being revolutionaries, for
their old image as capitalist exploiters was still alive as well. These
Jews were seen simultaneously as revolutionaries and as exploiters
—a myth which had haunted them since their emancipation, and
which after the war became transformed into the Jewish-capitalist-
Bolshevik conspiracy, uniting all those forces that seemed to pre-
vent national liberation. It was at this point that the conspiracy was
integrated with the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, which the re-
actionary Black Hundreds carried with them in their flight from
Russia.15 The London Times’s correspondent in Moscow had no
doubt that the horrors of the Bolshevik revolution were an act of
Jewish vengeance.16

The belief in a Jewish-Bolshevik conspiracy ruling over Russia
and already prepared to take over the rest of Europe cropped up in
every nation. In England, writers like G. K. Chesterton and John
Buchan were fascinated by such conspiracies.17 Even the young
Winston Churchill talked about the “dark power of Moscow,”
where cosmopolitan conspirators from the underworld of the great
cities had gathered (though later he was one of the first Western
statesmen to realize that the German question could not be di-
vorced from the Jewish question, because Hitler’s loathsome racism
was built into the Nazi régime).18 Nevertheless, the impact of such
fantasies was negligible on a nation that had won the war and had
not lost its balance. A French rightist paper in 1920 reviewed the
Protocols under the simple but telling heading: “The Origins of
Bolshevism.”19 In France such ideas did not lead to the activation
of racism either, for here too there had been no national defeat and
no revolution. But in Germany it was a more serious portent of the
times when in 1921 Fritz Halbach published Comrade Levi
(Kamerad Levi), in which a young Communist agitator was pic-
tured as on the best of terms with his rich banker father. Each
wanted world power, and they collaborated in order to obtain it,
working both sides of the street. The idea of a Jewish-Bolshevik
conspiracy haunted the imagination of many others besides Adolf
Hitler, but his belief in the Protocols was to be fatal. During the
Russian campaign in the Second World War, for example, he or-
dered the immediate execution of every captured Bolshevik political
commissar, considering them the spearhead of the Jewish-Bolshevik
conspiracy.20

The result of this newly gained Jewish visibility was immediate.
Central Europe saw no pogroms, but instead a wave of anti-Jewish
measures, not by governments but by important social and cultural
organizations. German student fraternities now introduced Aryan
qualifications for membership, and national student organizations
throughout eastern Europe campaigned for a Jewish numeros
clausus.21 Conservative parties tended to adopt anti-Semitism as
useful in electoral politics, while Jews were excluded from war vet-
erans’ associations. As yet, there was little overt violence against the
Jews in countries like Germany or Austria. But apart from sporadic
outbreaks (mostly at universities), hatred and fear was building up
be released after 1933. Every new anti-Jewish law proclaimed by the
Nazis was preceded by popular outbreaks that were directed,
though not necessarily created, by the régime.22

In eastern Europe, by contrast, violence remained common after
the First World War. Several factors accounted for this volatility on
tire interwar period, popular violence against the Jews flared up, although the dictatorship of Marshall Josef Piłsudski, set up in 1926, proved benevolent and even friendly. But after Piłsudski’s death in 1935, conditions worsened as the Conservative Party and the rightist National Democrats allied themselves to the military who held the real power. The anti-Jewish measures now introduced varied from ghetto-benches and a number of clauses in universities, to an economic boycott supported by Church and state. Finally, in 1938, when the Nazis expelled some 15,000 Polish Jews from the Reich, Poland refused to receive her actual citizens. Their life and death in the no-man’s-land at the German-Polish border signalized a bleak future for the mass of Polish Jewry.

The Polish government after Piłsudski opposed Jewish assimilation and held that the Jews were a distinct nationality. The régime of the colonels asserted that it rejected all racism, yet forced the emigration of Jews from Poland. The Jewish stereotype was spread in spite of all denials of racism, and Jews were pictured by the state and by the Catholic Church as dirty and slovenly, as usurers and even white slavers. The government’s policy was always ambivalent: it urged restraint upon the anti-Semites to its right, while at the same time itself using anti-Semitism in order to cement national unity. Violence in postwar Poland was sporadic, and racism as yet ambivalent, being interlaced with the traditional Catholic anti-Semitism.

All over Europe radical rightist parties sprang up in the wake of revolution and counter-revolution, as white terror took the place of red terror. Yet régimes came to power which were reactionary rather than of the radical right; but even here anti-Semitism sometimes became a part of government policy. The accession of Nicolas Horthy in Hungary and the military dictatorship in Poland after 1935 provide examples of this development. But even further south, in Romania, the Jewish problem remained alive. Yet it was not until the 1930’s that such nations, governed by reactionaries, were influenced by radical rightist parties who desired a final solution of the Jewish question. Polish, Hungarian, or Austrian reactionaries in power, fearful of any unrest, in fact more effectively prevented anti-
Semitic violence by a radical right than the weaker parliamentary democracies. They feared that radical anti-Semitism might lead to the breakdown of law and order. Eventually, after the Nazi seizure of power, the head of the representative assembly of German Jewry, Leo Baeck, would dream of a military dictatorship in Germany as the last hope for the Jews. Neithor Horthy in Hungary, the king in Romania, Ignaz Seipel in Austria, nor Piłсудski in Poland were racists. Their anti-Semitism remained Christian and traditional; Jews must be kept out of government and held at arm’s length, but left alone.

Eventually this attitude was challenged by the Iron Cross in Hungary, the Iron Guard in Romania, the Nazis in Austria, and other such movements. In western Europe, too, traditional conservative nationalism was at first more important than the radical right. France had her Action Française, but also a number of Fascist and racist groups, although until the 1930’s these remained small and inept. England was without any important radical right until Sir Oswald Mosley founded his British Union of Fascists in 1931. Initially, these groups were small, but then neither England nor France had lived under the shadow of revolution or suffered from a serious conflict of nationalities, and both had been victorious in the war. But even in Germany the radical right was a minority during the 1920’s when compared with the conservative political party, or other groupings of the center and left. That radical right, whether the Volkish Defense and Offensive League (Deutschvolkische Schutz- und Trutz-Bund) or the insignificant German Workers Party, was founded as a direct reaction to the revolution. The small German Workers Party—soon to be called the National Socialist Workers Party—arose out of a rightist society (the Thule Bund) which had organized itself during the Bavarian revolution of 1918.

The Volkish Defensive and Offensive League, founded by rightist splinter groups in 1919, was the most important of such organizations in the early days of the Weimar Republic. At its height, in 1922, the organization claimed 100,000 members, and that may have been an underestimation. It revived ritual murder accusations, as well as reprinting Röhm’s Talmud Jesu. The Protocols...
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Martin Bormann, the dreaded head of Hitler's chancery during the war, and Rudolf Höss, the commandant of the Auschwitz death camp, were both Fehmne murderers. In 1933 they executed a youth who was suspected of betraying the hiding place of illegal arms to the police.34

Following the war, violence persisted in much of central and eastern Europe. But it was in a defeated and disorganized Germany that the radical right founded its most powerful allies from the very beginning. The agricultural union (Bund der Landwirte) and the trade union of commercial employees put themselves at the disposal of the Volksch Defensive and Offensive League.35 The Kapp Putsch of March 1920, in which right-wing elements attempted to overthrow the republic, was important in demonstrating the relationship of the conservatives and the Free Corps to Volksch racism. Wolfgang Kapp was a Pan-German member of the Prussian aristocracy. His personal connections reached down to the playwright and journalist Dietrich Eckart, who as Hitler's political mentor was a member of the newly founded German Workers' Party. Members of the Ehrhardt Free Corps who gave military support to Kapp's venture wanted to start a pogrom against the Jews, but Kapp restrained them, in spite of his own anti-Semitism.36 The traditional conservatives, which valued law and order, won out. The Kapp Putsch was over in five days, for this time the army remained loyal to the new republic.

In spite of its temporary loyalty, the army itself was infected with anti-Semitism. For example, in 1920 a memorandum by a regiment directed to the Bavarian minister-president called for a massacre of the Jews if the allies blockaded Germany again.37 The army's dischastement with the republic eventually made it vulnerable to the ideas of the Volksch Defensive and Offensive League, whose literature was publicly distributed by one general in 1920. The army's view was summarized in 1924 by a lieutenant writing at a point when the early crises of the republic seemed to have been overcome: "Ebert [president of the republic], pacifists, Jews, democrats, black, red, and gold [the new flag] and the French are all forces which want to destroy Germany."38 To be sure, the higher officers did not attempt to differentiate between Jews in general and those who had distinguished themselves in the war and should be treated as if they were good Germans. Still, most of the army (as well as the even more radical navy) must be added to the large landowners and the conservatives as being infected with racism.

Yet such a view of the Jewish question would have seemed absurd to most European Jews until well into the Nazi era. For the moment there were allies: governments in western and central Europe who were committed to tolerance and hostile to discrimination, as well as political parties of the left and center who believed in furthering the process of Jewish assimilation. Center parties were strong in England and France, by whatever name they called themselves, for both Tory and Labor in Britain, for example, were committed to a pluralist society at home based on moderation and tolerance. This was also true of the center parties and of the Social Democrats in Germany, who in fact became allies of the Jews in their fight against anti-Semitism.39 Basically, the liberal tradition still held, even though liberal parties were in decline. The liberal heritage was taken over in England by all major parties, in France by Socialists and Radical Socialists, in Germany by the Social Democrats. Even in eastern Europe where there were functioning liberal parties, as in Rumania, they proved to be friendly toward the Jews. But what of the radical left, which a minority of highly visible Jews had supported and at times even led in the attempted postwar revolutions? Communist and leftist splinter parties certainly believed in complete Jewish assimilation. Karl Kautsky—the "pope" of prewar socialism—set the tone for the discussion of the Jewish question after the war. He had updated Karl Marx's view of the
Jews without introducing any basic changes. Kaufsky's *Race and the Jewish Question* (*Rasse und Judentum*, 1914) accepted the negative Jewish stereotype in attributing to Jews a fetishistic regard for goods, a love of money, and a devotion to commerce. When capitalism collapsed, he maintained, Jews would vanish. Meanwhile, they must try to shed their religion and join the proletarian fight for the liberation of mankind that would lead to universal peace and brotherhood.

While the German Social Democrats as inheritors of pluralist liberalism never accepted this attitude after the war, because it seemed too dangerous when living under the cloud of a militantly anti-Semitic right, the Communist parties founded after the war adopted Kaufsky's reasoning both in Europe and in the Soviet Union. Jews did not constitute a separate nationality but a people victimized by their milieu. Jewish capital must be condemned, together with Aryan capital. However, the stereotype implied in Marx's and Kaufsky's view of the Jews now came to haunt communism, especially in Germany, where that party had to compete with the radical right for allegiance. Karl Radek, the emissary of the Comintern to Germany, in 1923 praised the Nazi martyr Albert Leo Schlager who had fought the French occupation of the Ruhr, and at the same time called for an end to both "circumcised and uncircumcised capital."  42 The message was plain enough. It was repeated after 1930, when the Communist leader Heinrich Neumann called on the Nazi masses to join the Communists in a common struggle and to end the "fratricidal war." At the same time Jews were all but eliminated from the Central Committee of the Communist Party and from most of its press. Soviet policy provided encouragement and leadership to the German Communist Party here as in all other questions. Stalin was winning his fight against Trotsky and anti-Semitism had once again become fashionable in Russia. But racism was not involved here. On the contrary, the objective was that "vanishing of Judaism" for which Karl Marx had called, and which would leave the individual Jew a fully integrated member of the proletariat. The tragedy was that a radical denial of racism was combined with the accusation that the Jews themselves were racist. Ideals of conspiracy again played their part in both Germany and Russia, this time not in a Jewish-Bolshevik conspiracy, but in a "Jewish-Zionist" or "Jewish-cosmopolitan" conspiracy, supposedly directed against Communist ideas of equality and against the German and Russian nations.

On the face of it, the Communist position merely perpetuated the older attitudes which had prevailed in the eighteenth century when the emancipation of the Jews was being advocated: to the individual Jew all rights, to the Jews as a group none. However, in practice the individual Jew in the party tended to be viewed with suspicion as a potential fifth column. After 1928, even the most radical negation of racism could embrace a belief in the Jewish stereotype and in a Jewish conspiracy. The strength of racism in postwar Europe was not solely confined to the radical right, but spread overtly or covertly throughout society and politics.

In 1930 even the German Social Democrats were wary of putting up Jewish candidates for public office in Germany, not only because Jews were thought to be troublesome intellectuals but also because by that time the radical right determined the debate about the national future. 44 Left or center had to argue on the terrain occupied by the racist right, and this may well have been one of the Nazis' principal victories before seizing power. It was in Germany that the right achieved this advantage. Austria and Hungary had undergone similar social and political experiences following the war, but there reactionary regimes had brought at least temporary stability. The Weimar Republic did not get much rest, for political disturbance was followed by the worst inflation any nation in Europe had known. By 1930 even some German Social Democrats were stressing the importance of the "Aryan Estate" rather than the "Jewish Marx." This condition of the left was not confined to Germany alone, although it was there that it was to have the most momentous consequences. In east central Europe, while the left was usually characterized as "Jewish" by the right, in reality it was nowhere un-
conditioned sympathetic toward the Jews. For example, it was sadly ironic that during the Hungarian revolution of 1919, led by Jews, anti-Jewish riots and pogroms were instigated by sections of the working class. Anti-Jewish feeling sprang from the grass roots of the party, not only in Hungary but in Rumania as well, where socialist leaders at times made common cause with anti-Semites.42

In Poland, the Social Democratic Party was helpful to the Jews, as was its German counterpart, and its relation with the Jewish socialist Bund were good, especially in times of increasing Jewish persecution. However, the Pilsudski dictatorship forced Socialists into alliance with the other Polish parties and the Bund was left isolated.44

Although the penetration of racism into the left must not be overplayed, by virtue of this penetration the Jews were further isolated and deprived of effective allies. Most Jews in Europe were living normal and settled lives, deporting racism but thinking that this too would pass. The deeper racist trends of the postwar world were lost on them and on most of their fellow men. Highly visible, yet isolated and deprived of stout and uncompromising allies, Jews were ripe for the picking by a racist policy whose time had apparently come. The position of the assimilated central European Jews was, for all their relative prosperity and security, not unlike the position of their often despised eastern European brothers, described by Leo Pinsker as far back as 1884 when he wrote: "For the living, the Jew is a dead man; for the natives an alien and a vagrant; for property holders a beggar; for the poor and exploited a mil-linaire; for patriots a man without country; for all classes, a hated rival."45 The history of racism in Europe had encouraged this state of affairs, though it alone was hardly responsible for its existence. Racism had always exploited every opportunity that came its way, and the biggest of these was just around the corner.

War and revolution were the prelude to the transformation of racist theory into practice. The theory itself had not changed ever since its formulation in the prewar years. Through the eugenics movement, the so-called science of race had forged ahead, but it was the "mystery" of race that became more deeply rooted as a result of the war. Germany and Austria, where such mystique had always found a home, were precisely those nations most directly affected by the aftermath of the war. As we saw, the German Workers Party was born in the Munich revolution and as part of the Thule Bund, the very name of which was meant to evoke the Aryan north. There, Dietrich Eckart of the Thule Bund, the political mentor of Adolf Hitler, expounded his racist anti-Semitism, which blamed all evil upon the Jews. It was in Munich that Alfred Rosenberg, in close touch with the exiled Russian Black Hundreds, began to write his Myth of the Twentieth Century (Der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts, 1930), which saw in the world war the beginning of a world revolution, but hardly that of which Lenin had dreamed. The race-soul was rising up from the blood of the wartime martyrs, breaking through to victory. Racism was the one true "people's Church," which would replace Christianity.

The actual situation after the war encouraged the production and spread of racist theory. Germany, which because of the war and revolution became the center of racist activity, also produced popular handbooks of racism that were widely read. L. Claus in The Nordic Soul (Die Nordische Seele, 1930), for example, held that the race-soul produced by the Nordic blood was the font of all creativity, regardless of the Aryan's outward appearance.46 This "idealistic heresy" was attacked by the most prolific writer of popular books on race in postwar Germany, Hans F. K. Günther, whose Racial Science of the German People (Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes, 1924) defined and illustrated once more the racial stereotypes of beautiful Aryan and ugly Jew. However, Günther attempted to preserve some ties to scientific observation by contending that no pure racial type existed, only less perfect, less pure types.47 Yet all Aryans in one way or another shared in their "ideal-type," while Jews possessed the dominant traits of their race.

These books added nothing new to racial thought; they were simply summaries in popular form of previous theory. But it is worth noting that after 1918 such popularizations appeared for the
most part in Germany rather than in other European nations, and
that they were symptomatic of the fact that this nation was moving
to the forefront of racist thought, though as yet Germany was not
the only nation girding itself for what Lucy Dawidowicz has called
"the war against the Jews."

CHAPTER TWELVE

From Theory to Practice

The hurricane which had swept through Europe after the
First World War destroyed many a dike that had protected
Jews against terror, defamation, and racism. Governments
proved too weak or too unwilling to restrain the nationalist fury
which followed the abortive revolutions. At the same time, repres-
sentative government devoted to pluralistic politics was under siege
in central and western Europe, while eastern Europe came under
dictatorship. Everywhere the end of the war ushered in an age of
mass politics and mass movements which advocated a definition of
democracy different from that of parliamentary government. Politici-
cal participation was defined by acting out a political liturgy in
mass movements or in the streets and by seeking security through
national myths and symbols which left little or no room for those
who were different. The war had transformed politics into a drama
built upon shared emotions. Racism all too easily provided unity to
this drama as it was played out on the European stage.

At first the breakthrough to racist practice was confined to social
and political organizations which did not necessarily reflect gov-
ernment policy. We saw that after 1918 in Germany, for example,
student fraternities, veterans organizations, and certain political
parties closed their doors to Jews. There had always been groups
which had excluded Jews on racial grounds, but now these moved
from the fringe into the center of middle-class life, basing them-
selves upon "Aryan clauses" of membership. Conservative parties