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**THE RISE OF ANTI-SEMITISM IN GERMANY AND AUSTRIA
AFTER THE EMANCIPATION**

The history of anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria has a long history, but what I will give attention to here, are the roots of anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria during the 19th century shortly after the Emancipation. What Jews experienced socially, economically, and politically during this period, surely must have played a hand in what was about to take place later on in these countries during the 20th century, and of course during the twelve years of National Socialism.

“Early in history when the Jews crossed the Alps and the Rhine into Germany, they came into territory much more backward than the Mediterranean. Later, during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the kings of Poland invited them to come to their lands to supply their kingdom with a middle class. Similarly in nineteenth century Hungary, where an inflexible social structure prevented peasants and craftsmen from expanding their businesses, and an upper class who were not allowed to fill their pockets with money, Jews experienced in seizing opportunities not already monopolized by Gentiles, inevitably rushed into the vacuum. They did the same, though to a lesser extent, in Germany and Austria.”¹ In Eastern Europe and other countries, Jews were forced into the early factories where they worked respectively as clothiers and tailors. Jews were too numerous and their freedom of movement too restricted to enable all of them to survive in nonproductive occupations. They were forced to turn to handicraft and later industrial labor. Wasted away by having for generations live in very small towns, and where the work was less physical, they looked to industries which required skill and concentration. “Their main objective was fear of becoming submerged in a mass-organized Gentile world. Often independence brought no economic benefit; shirt making or umbrella mending in a slum attic

¹ K. Kautsky, *Rasse und Judentum* (2nd ed., Stuttgart, 1921), p. 77

meant a low income and long hours, but it enabled the Jew to observe his religious festivals and dietary practices in peace, and to perpetuate voluntarily his own little ghetto.”²

Final emancipation in both Germany and Austria dates from 1867. Some Jews even participated in the revolution of 1848, giving rise to legal equality. Five Jews also sat in the Prussian National Assembly, and they were also represented in at least seven of the smaller states. But the revocation of the Austrian constitution in 1851 made it possible to bring back many of the old restrictions. In Prussia emancipation was not rescinded, but widely evaded by administrative means; all branches of the public service were virtually closed to Jews. Then the political movements of 1866 and 1867 helped solidify the principles of Liberalism in both Austria and Germany which renewed the mutually beneficial alliance between Liberals and Jews.

As for populace, the Jewish population grew enormously through births and migration in the late 1800's, especially in the capital cities. Budapest in the nineteenth century grew faster than any other European capital where the Jews in 1910 numbered 203,687 or nearly one quarter of the population. So prominent was the Jewish element in the Hungarian capital that it was also known as "Judapest." The anti-Semitic movements which started in the capitals grew more and more popular as many early publicists grew weary and haunted by the vision of a Jewish deluge. "Much had been written on the Jewish majority in finance also, and since the eighteenth century, the dynasty of Rothschild had risen to the top in four countries. The two leading banking houses of Berlin were Bleichroder and the Disconto-Gesellschaft of Hansemann, both Jewish. In Vienna all the major houses were Jewish except that of the Greek Sina. Beside them were the numerous smaller bankers and brokers of Berlin, Frankfurt, Hamburg, and Vienna.”³ Jews were attracted to many professions, especially medicine and journalism. Even though the Jewish

² Ibid

³ Ibid

intelligentsia was hated, they were recruited by the successful business elite and those who had succeeded in business. In Vienna, the newspapers were dominated by Jews, and in Germany, of the twenty-one daily newspapers, thirteen were owned by Jewish families. "Of course, the liberal press owed much of its origins to Jews as well. It is not merely that the Jews provided the patronage, the audience, and by press criticism the canons of taste, they also provided the creators and the authors."⁴ "In the invigorating air of this remarkable cosmopolis," says Julius Braunthal in his autobiography, "Jewish talent blossomed as vigorously as it did in Granada under Moslem rule. This was the nursery of anti-Semitism."⁵

But what is interesting is that only 10 to 15% of Jews lived in the city of Vienna. Most Jews who lived outside of the city were poor, and some even died of starvation. So, it is somewhat ironic that the anti-Semites aimed their hate at all Jews and not just the Jewish capitalists. In fact, some historians feel that the rich Bourgeoisie might have "got off lightly", and that most of the anti-Semitism, which was intended for them, was placed on the common Jew who actually took the brunt of most of the hatred.

We see that before the Austrian and Berlin crash of 1873, favorable circumstances had combined to speed Germany's industrial expansion. The beginnings of large-scale industry coincided with the building of railways and the facilitation and formation of companies. Consider the fact that in Britain sixty years separated the application of steam to textile manufacture and the first railway. So, by entering the field late, Germany was able to take advantage of improvements in machine design which made the exploitation of mines and factories easier and more profitable than in Britain. The crash of 1873 affected mostly steel and iron, but the investment market continued to steam ahead at a feverish pitch. The guilds did not disappear, but most of their privileges were taken away by 1811 and taken away completely in

⁴ Ibid

⁵ J. Braunthal, *In Search of the Millennium* (London, 1945), p. 17

1869. "The master craftsmen whom they represented were particularly hard pressed by the impact of factory production, but they succeeded in staging a comeback. As late as the 1850's, there were seventy trades in which guild membership or a craftsman's certificate was compulsory."⁶ "To the student of anti-Semitism this early inhibition of social mobility and large-scale survival of "pre-capitalist" classes is of great importance. There is not a single anti-Semitic "Reform Party" which does not include in its program items for the strengthening of artisans and peasants, often claiming outright the re-establishment of compulsory corporations."⁷

The new economy had its ups and downs, and it created a sense of separation for many. Socially, most people remained rigid, and the idea of liberalism never got off the ground in neither Austria nor Germany. Bismarck turned away from liberalism and turned to the conservatives, and as Adlai Stevenson remarked, it had "dragged these countries, kicking and screaming into the nineteenth century." The ones that made it created a revolution of culture and social extravagance. Not all were Jews, and if so, they were not the first Jews to rank with the nobility. The changes which society had undergone were the result of practices with which Jews were associated, and which were popularly supposed to benefit Jews more than anyone else. One pamphleteer complained:

"In their business and in their social gatherings, which take place out of doors and where they can be observed, they are so engrossed by their own circle that they see and hear only their own affairs and conversation; but if they were to listen and to look to their left and right, their ears and eyes would perceive much that was not pleasant. Christians, who happen to observe different manners, self-control, and formalities outwardly as well, must be amazed and pained by the behavior of Jewish families. There is no exhaustive expression to describe the unseemliness, the offensiveness, and the noise, as if they were entirely amongst themselves, which are to be observed in public gardens, especially in bathing places, in the streets, on tramways and railway stations, in every province and town. They might well refrain from this bumptiousness if they had any idea that there is an invisible boundary which distinguishes and separates the genuinely refined from the parvenu. It is really to be marveled at that their behavior does not provoke more

⁶ Figures from Stolper, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-2; Clapham, *op. cit.*, pp. 281, 235, 339; S. B. Clough and C. W. Cole, *Economic History of Europe* (3rd ed., Boston, 1952), p. 358

⁷ *Ibid*

objections than is the case. The sensitive among them are ashamed, but even they are too much involved and fail in securing an improvement.”⁸

Liberalism was never the doctrine of the masses and too many suffered and were disillusioned during the brief periods it triumphed. Liberalism remained in the custody of the minority, which many Jews were apart of. From the 1870's onward it was steadily diminishing, but holding out longest, perhaps, in the press and the universities. “Because neither the economy nor the society of the German and Austrian Empires was ever thoroughly liberalized, the alliance between the ruling class and the lower middle-class officials could come about. It was this strange alliance that formed the basis of political anti-Semitism. It was a coalition of extremes against the common enemy.”⁹

In earlier times in Austria and Germany, anti-Semitism, whether political, social, or religious, was discredited and accepted by only a small minority of the politically prevailing groups. In the course of the next thirty years, it was diligently preached by an increasing number of self appointed prophets, until it reestablished itself and succeeded not only among the elite but also among the masses. The central ideology of this later period was Liberalism, and a study of the academic content of anti-Semitism in this time, shows that it represented in the first place, a reaction against this ideology. It prospered when it did because to many people, Liberalism seemed unattractive and harmful. When we look at the main components of nineteenth century European Liberalism, it can be summarized as parliamentary government, the rule of law, the absence of legally established class privileges, a laissez-faire economy, and freedom of speech and association. Against almost all these concepts, anti-Semites took a stand. In addition to these, Liberalism had a far wider meaning, It was a set of moral qualities involving rationalism, and humanism. “To be "liberal" means, in German even more than in English, to be just,

⁸ Anon., *Wer tragt die Schuld an der Antisemiten-Bewegung?* (Berlin, 1886), p 17

⁹ K. Kautsky, *Rasse und Judentum* (2nd ed., Stuttgart, 1921), p. 110

broadminded, and generous and the anti-Semites opposed not only the institutions of Liberalism; they fought its whole moral system, and its whole concept of human existence.”¹⁰

There was therefore nothing surprising about the Conservatives' attitude toward the emancipation of the Jews in the 1860's. Since the struggle for emancipation was so closely connected with the struggle for Liberalism, those who opposed one opposed the other also, hoping to “kill both birds with the same stone.”

“Some years earlier a Conservative member of the Reichstag pointed out the speed with which Jews were monopolizing business, banking, and the more lucrative professions, such as the law. He similarly complained that Jews acquired their disproportionate wealth to insure for themselves the most comfortable careers and the least laborious work.”¹¹ For example, the anti-Semite Liebermann von Sonnenberg, another anti-Semitic delegate sees a system that enables the emancipated Jew to rise faster than anyone else, and that it is part of a system from which Jews stand to gain more than others. "It is certainly no fault of ours," he amplified on a later occasion, "that this capital is mainly in Jewish hands."¹²

Wilhelm Marr is generally believed to have invented the word "anti-Semitism. He also coined the concept of racial anti-Semitism. The decision to move the fight against the Jews from the religious to the racial sphere was a clever one. Emancipation had been justified on the grounds of religious tolerance; any anti-Semitism, therefore, had to face the damaging criticism of religious prejudice. “There must be no question here of parading religious prejudices when it is a question of race and when the difference lies in the "blood,” he said. Marr acknowledges that during the Middle Ages Jews were used as scapegoats and whipping boys by princes and that they had undoubtedly aided industrial expansion. “It is neither surprising that the Jews

¹⁰ H. S. Hughes, *Consciousness and Society. The Re-Orienting of European Social Thought, 1890- 1930*(London, 1959), pp. 9-10

¹¹ "Hilarious Bank Berger" (i.e. F. F. Perrot?) *Die sogenannte deutsche "Reichsbank"* (2nd ed., Berlin, 1877), p 16

¹² Ditto

welcomed the revolutions of 1789 and 1848, nor that, having gained supremacy; they show no mercy to their former oppressors. The Jews have beaten the Germans in an open fight; German stupidity, by the adoption of Jewish economic doctrines, has helped the Jews to power.”¹³

Marr was the first to value the possibilities opened by propaganda on racial lines and the benefit of using extreme and dishonest methods on matters which appealed to extreme and dishonest opinions. Other anti-Semites of the time like Duhring represented the colossal form of anti-Semitic extremism and gained a following in the “Reformvereine” which was then springing up all over Germany. He inspired one of their main branches, the Westfälische Reform, and he was above all influential in the student movement. One of the students he influenced, another anti-Semite was George von Schonerer. This new point of view, that of the inherent evil of the Jews, was taken up again in the 1890's by Theodor Fritsch, an engineer of Leipzig, who had been active in the first stirrings of the anti-Semitic movement in Saxony. He made up for his mediocre intellect by the large amount of his propaganda, which for nearly half a century made him probably the most tireless of anti-Semitic publicists. His writings cover a bewildering variety of topics from the advocacy of garden cities to a denial of the Theory of Relativity. He was one of the few anti-Semites of his generation who continued their public activities into the 1920's and became a Nazi Reichstag deputy. His death in September 1933 even evoked a flattering tribute from Julius Streicher. “Also attacked was "the false humanitarianism which lies behind the concepts of equal rights for all. The mistake of those who voted for Jewish emancipation was in the assumption that all men and all people were equally endowed in spirit and sensibility and with the same urge in their hearts to do good and spread joy and happiness around them. Exceptions were believed to have arisen through oppression, and ill-treatment on

¹³ W. Marr, *Vom jüdischen Kriegsschauplatz. Eine Streitschrift* (Berne, 1879), p. 19

the part of more powerful elements. It was from such causes that people believed the bad qualities of Jews had to be explained.”¹⁴

“The black-haired Jewish youth lies in wait for hours on end, satanically glaring at and spying on the unsuspecting girl whom he plans to seduce, adulterating her blood and removing her from the bosom of her own people. The Jew uses every means to undermine the racial foundations of a subjugated people. In his systematic efforts to ruin girls and women he strives to break down the last barriers of discrimination between himself and other peoples. The Jews were responsible for bringing Negroes into the Rhineland with the ultimate idea of bastardizing the whole white race. This pestilential adulteration of the blood, of which hundreds of thousands of our people take no account, is being systematically practiced by the Jew today. Systematically these negroid parasites in our national body corrupt our innocent fair-haired girls and thus destroy something which can no longer be replaced in this world.”¹⁵

This statement by Adolf Hitler was not a new point at all, in fact the earliest historian of Stoker’s Christian Social movement noted in the 1880’s, “the observation made by many others beside myself, that there were in Berlin, at the beginning of the eighties, establishments where the only sight was that of young Jewish men in the intimate company of beautiful girls of Christian descent.”¹⁶ Both of these anti-Semites opinions reflect the fear of miscegenation and the constant references to Jewish sensuality and to the purity of blood. “The belief in nihilism when it came to minorities ran prevalent amongst all anti-Semites. Coupled with sadism, anti-Semites needed a clear-cut dichotomy between absolute power and absolute submission. Since anti-Semites felt themselves surrounded by evil powers plotting their destruction, only the thought of their conspirator’s destruction could help them.”¹⁷

Konstantin Frantz, a critic of Bismarck and the second Empire, had already occupied himself with the Jewish question in a short pamphlet published at the beginning of his career, and at a time when the stirrings of constitutionalism in Prussia attracted many contributions to

¹⁴ Anon., *Der Antisemitismus, Berechtigung und Notwendigkeit, sowie Zwecke und Ziele desselben* (Dortmund, 1889), pp. 105-6

¹⁵ A. Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (trans. J. Murphy, London, 1939), p. 273

¹⁶ M. Schon, *Die Geschichte der Berliner Bewegung* (Leipzig, 1889), p. 60

¹⁷ Ditto

the subject. In many of his pamphlets, he shows concern with the moral basis of political life as we see in these two excerpts:

“The only surety for this is faith, and therefore a completely moral communal life presupposes the acknowledgement of a common religion. Since the authority of modern states rests on the acknowledgment of Christ, Jews must be excluded from citizenship, barred from public offices, and restricted to closed communities where they can maintain their own religion.”¹⁸

“Social Monarchy has more to offer Germany than constitutional monarchy; only a return to Christianity can save Germany from National Liberalism and Jewish domination. The steadily growing Jewish domination will gradually lead to such an intolerable situation that we shall, in the end, see an outbreak of popular fury. Neither the police nor even the army would offer the Jews any protection against such a great popular movement,” he wrote in 1883.¹⁹

Another conservative and the most extreme anti-Bismarckian, anti-Semitic State

Socialist was Rudolf Meyer. Meyer states:

“As long as Prince Bismarck remains its most powerful idol, the German nation will be sacrificed for the sake of the Reich, the Reich for the sake of the Chancellor and the Chancellor is owned by the Jews and the Grunder. For our political course, therefore, only one way remains open: elimination of the present system and its carrier.”²⁰

Both Frantz and Meyer represented the relatively moderate and intellectually honest opposition to Liberalism of the 1870's. Paul Botticher who later adopted his great aunt's name de Lagarde, and lived from 1827 to 1891 was even more extreme in his views. His writings on religion, the state, and the Jews were neither systematic nor consistent; the most important of them were collected under the title of “Deutsche Schriften” and published in 1886, and since then have been reprinted innumerable times. In public, as in private life, he never got tired of uncovering a new conspiracy. All of this led logically to anti-Semitism. He declaimed it passionately but could never make up his mind between segregation and assimilation as answers to the Jewish question. In reproaching the economic and political role of the Jews in Liberal society his language was completely straightforward: “For the sewer of the speculations and influence of the stock exchanges the world has to thank the Jews. To let the Jews into the

¹⁸ K. Frantz, *Ahasverus, oder die Judenfrage* (Berlin, 1844), p. 18

¹⁹ Frantz, *Der Untergang der alten Parteien*, p. 105

²⁰ R. Meyer, *Politische Grunder und die Korruption in Deutschland* (Leipzig, 1877), pp. 110-11

Prussia of today, the Prussia of Altenstein and Falk, is to turn Prussia into Palestine.”²¹ He also stated later on: “Like Socialism and Catholicism, Liberalism was an international conspiracy, not red or black, but grey. The Grey International "is, like all its sisters, without a fatherland, and therefore of the greatest danger to every nation.”²² This denunciation of internationalism is a valuable clue to Lagarde's attitude towards the Jews. He would go on to say: “The Jews are a nation, not a religious community; at least they are the latter only because they are the former.”

As Pan-German attitudes increased, Lagarde's views of Jewish culture would become obvious:

“Expansion abroad is useless if the Jews, as a culturally separate group are allowed to survive among the Germans. It is impossible to tolerate a “nation within a nation.” The Jews will become Germans only when they continually hear from us that they have not yet achieved this, and that as Jews, they are for us a repulsive burden useless for history. We are anti-Semites because the Jewish community living among us betrays, in the nineteenth century and in Germany, views, customs and ways of speech which go back to the period of the separation of the peoples after the Flood, and because they do so, appear as extraordinary amongst us as flint axes and arrow heads. We are anti-Semites, not enemies of the Jews, because in the midst of a Christian world Jews are Asiatic pagans.”²³

He continues to come out into the open in some of his later writings:

“If the Jews have survived as a group, this is a sign of German weakness and this circumstance proves that life in Germany is not yet sufficiently energetic and serious. Every objectionable Jew is a grave reproach to the genuineness of our Germandom. However, the nation cannot live energetically and seriously, if the governments do not remove from its neck the burden of well meaning, but simpleminded liberalism which they press upon it.”²⁴

We can see that Lagarde like many anti-Semites in the late 19th century and early 20th century was both a romantic conservative and an ultramodern imperialist. He believed both in aristocracy and pluralism, and in integral tribalism. But because he was not a racialist, he favored assimilation, except for an occasional indulgence in genocidal fantasies. Unlike those who regarded the Jewish question as merely religious or economic or constitutional, he believed that there had to be a “final solution”. “The Jews as Jews are a grave misfortune to every European

²¹ Lagarde, "Programm für die konservative Partei Preussens" (1884), Schriften, Vol. 1, p. 424

²² Lagarde, "Die graue Internationale" (1881), Schriften, Vol. I, p. 358

²³ Lagarde, "Juden und Indogermanen," Mitteilungen, Vol. II, p. 331

²⁴ Lagarde, Die graue Internationale," Schriften, Vol. I, p. 370

people. It follows for Germany that the Jews must either emigrate from Germany, or become Germans within it.”²⁵

“So Germany provided that correct "conjunction of facts and ideas" which we have seen to be essential if a political movement is to prosper. To that extent, therefore, anti-Semitism was a "spontaneous" product, arising out of a particular situation, not a creed foisted on the public from above by an unscrupulous ruling class. Once its possibilities were apparent, however, it undoubtedly was exploited, and with the catastrophic success which we all know.”²⁶

As German and Austrian religious, economic and political anti-Semitism became more xenophobic and prevalent through the 1800's; the effect on Jews and the “Jewish question” did not compare to when the Jewish question would finally be answered in January of 1942. Answered by the anti-Semitic racialists who became the calculating leaders of a twentieth century Germany already primed from the century before it. Primed for what would later become what Lawrence Langer calls “the rock in the stream of Humanity”, the biggest genocide ever in human history, and what Lucy S. Dawidowicz calls “The War against the Jews”.

Ipse simulat se captum, ut Te capiat; a Te inclusum, te finaliter concludat.

²⁵ Lagarde, Programm für die konservative Partei Preussens, "Schriften, Vol. I, p. 422

²⁶ Oakeshott, The Social and Political Doctrines of Contemporary Europe, p. 191

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