# Anti-Jewish Prejudices, Antisemitic Ideologies, Open Violence: Antisemitism in European Comparison from the 1870s to the First World War. A Commentary

by *Reinhard Rürup*

**Abstract**

*Reflecting the achievements of comparative historical research, this paper tries to outline the new feature of European antisemitism since the late 19th century. Political antisemitism is presented as a protest movement against the modern society, and the new term antisemitism was immediately adopted into European languages. The Christian churches, too, shared in the making of antisemitism and its struggle against liberalism, capitalism and secularisation. Although only in a few European countries did specifically antisemitic parties take part in general elections, nearly all European antisemites shared fundamental antisemitic convictions. In conclusion the papers points to some methodological problems of researches on antisemitism, from the danger of isolating the object of study to the overestimation of the dimensions of antisemitism, given that antisemitic actions are more likely documented than forms of coexistence between Jews and Christians. Furthermore, it is argued that too little attention is given to the opposing forces against antisemitism, or to the integration of Jews into general society, or to the support, Jewish politicians received from non-Jewish voters, as may be demonstrated, for example by the German working class movement. The paper concludes with a remark that despite the radical agitation and even in the face of the acts of violence against Jews, the impact of political antisemitism remained limited until the First World War.*

It is with good reason that comparison has been declared the "royal road" of historical research (Hans-Ulrich Wehler).[1] At the same time though, it is a road that historians have only ever embarked on tentatively. The number of comparative historical studies steadily increased in the second half of the 20th century, reflecting not only a broadening of the themes and a differentiation of the subject matter but also the continuously growing theoretical and methodological needs of modern historical studies. Nevertheless, down to the present day historical comparison has remained anything but the normal case for scholarly work: "Comparing is difficult and demands special effort" is how Jürgen Kocka laconically put it.[2]

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[1] Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *Introduction to Geschichte und Soziologie*, ed. Hans-Ulrich Wehler (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1972), 24; Jürgen Kocka, *"*Historische Komparatistik*," Geschichte und Vergleich. Ansätze und Ergebnisse international vergleichender Geschichtsschreibung*, eds. Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Jürgen Kocka, (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 1996), 49; for a survey on recent comparative research, see: Hartmut Kaelble, *"*Vergleichende Sozialgeschichte des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts: Forschung europäischer Historiker*," Geschichte und Vergleich. Ansätze und Ergebnisse international vergleichender Geschichtsschreibung,* eds. Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Jürgen Kocka, (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 1996), 91-130.

[2] This commentary was presented orally, using key terms and concepts as a basis. It has been slightly reworked for publication and in parts amended. The summarizing statements are based

As a rule two or at the most three countries are examined in international comparisons, and great effort and diligence is required if the individual countries are to be researched with the same attentiveness and the respective issues of interest compiled and elaborated from the available sources. For this reason it is more frequently the case that attention is focused on one country and the others included for the purpose of comparison are employed as a foil, enabling the particularities of the country of main interest to be recognized more distinctly and delineated more clearly. These kinds of study tend more towards furnishing a comparative perspective however than a historical comparative study in the strict sense. When the comparative interest centers not on just two or three countries but several, the preferred approach to pooling and presenting the studies remains the essay collection, where the singular contributions by specialists for the individual countries usually stand for themselves, more or less unconnected to the others. Measured against the claims raised by assertive historical comparative studies, this can only ever be a preliminary or intermediate stage, one that is indispensable however given the language competency required and the necessary familiarity with the specific situation of source materials and research. The more complex the theme to be examined in international comparison, the more difficult it is to go beyond a mere loose juxtaposition of contributions by specialists.

In the first decades of the 20th century limited to just a few pioneer studies, the history of antisemitism is meanwhile the subject of intensive scholarly effort across a number of disciplines in many countries and regions, above all in historical studies. For obvious reasons the main interest was always on developments in Germany and Austria, while for France and Russia, in part also for Britain, at least basic studies exist. In contrast, there is an urgent need to address the neglect of studies in Eastern Europe, Eastern Central Europe and Southeastern Europe, above all in those independent states whose territories were part of the Russian Empire and the Habsburg Monarchy until

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on the notes I took on the individual presentations and the subsequent discussions during the conference. Given the specific character of such a commentary, it seemed to me to make sense to dispense with footnotes. My own understanding of modern antisemitism, which of course informs the following observations and considerations, is to be found in numerous publications: Reinhard Rürup, *Emanzipation und Antisemitismus. Studien zur 'Judenfrage' der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft*, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck + Ruprecht, 1975 / 2nd. ed. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1987); Reinhard Rürup, "Antisemitismus und moderne Gesellschaft. Antijüdisches Denken und antijüdische Agitation im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert," *Das "bewegliche" Vorurteil, Aspekte des internationalen Antisemitismus*, eds. Christina von Braun and Eva-Maria Ziege, (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2004), 81-100; Id. "Der moderne Antisemitismus und die Entwicklung der historischen Antisemitismusforschung," *Antisemitismusforschung in den Wissenschaften*, eds. Werner Bergmann and Mona Körte, (Berlin: Metropol Verlag , 2004), 117-135. For the particularities of Jewish history in the period under discussion here, see: Id. "Tradition und Moderne. Jüdische Geschichte in Europa zwischen Aufbruch und Katastrophe," *Holocaust. Der nationalsozialistische Völkermord und die Motive seiner Erinnerung*, ed. Burckhard Asmuss, (Berlin: Edition Minerva, 2002), 17-34.

1918 and belonged to the Soviet Union or were located within the Soviet sphere of influence after 1945. In the present case this led to a constellation in which along with Russia (and Lithuania) and the Kingdom of Poland, which belonged to the Tsarist Empire, the overwhelming majority of essays were devoted to parts of the Habsburg Dual Monarchy, with Hungary, Slovakia, Galicia, and Croatia-Slavonia as well as Romania, Bulgaria and Greece all featuring, while from other European countries only Britain, Italy and Sweden were each discussed in a single essay. Germany and Austria, but also France, the Netherlands and Belgium, and the Iberian Peninsula were left out. One justification for this is that it could be assumed that all those taking part were sufficiently versed with developments in Germany and Austria in particular.

The studies collected here were set a time period, from the end of the 1870s to the outbreak of the First World War; however, the two-and-a-half decades regarded as the phase in which modern antisemitism formed in Europe were only analyzed in their entirety in a few cases. As a rule they are case studies more narrowly defined in terms of time period which address particular incidents or developments, ranging from anti-Jewish agitation through to parliamentary debates, from anti-Jewish discrimination by the state or in civil society through to political and administrative resistance to antisemitic assaults. The common interest of the comparative project is antisemitism as a political movement, antisemitic social practices, antisemitic semantics and rhetoric, the cultural anchoring of antisemitism in the respective society, the significance of anti-Jewish Christian traditions for modern antisemitism, the importance of anti-Jewish violence from the "ritual murder" disturbances through to pogroms, above all in Tsarist Russia, and finally the social and political allies and opponents of the antisemites.

Given the heterogeneity of the individual country – or more precisely – case studies, generalizing considerations on the overall results and thematically summarizing statements are only possible to a limited degree and with some reservation. What is immediately striking is that hostility towards Jews in most of the countries investigated here did indeed change in the transition from the 1870s to the 1880s. Coined in the fall of 1879 in Berlin, the term "antisemitism" was adopted into the various European languages without much hesitation, and at the very least a part of those population groups harboring anti-Jewish sentiments began to "modernize" themselves in terms of their mindset and behavior towards Jews. As a finding of conceptual history, this does not automatically mean that from now on antisemitism in the individual countries was determined primarily by "imports" from the German Reich or the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy; it was however of importance precisely in Eastern and Southeastern Europe that antisemitism became manifest and politically active in a new way in the economically, socially and in part politically progressive European nations, and not just in socially backward countries.

Another remarkable aspect is that religiously informed anti-Jewish attitudes, the animosity towards Jews passed on by the Churches, continued to be of great importance, obviously for many people even pivotal, not only in socially less developed countries, but also in Germany, France and Italy in the final decades of the 19th century. Old and new augmented and intensified one another in the antisemitic movements of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In many countries, and the case studies make this very clear, political Catholicism drew on the old anti-Jewish resentments just as much as the new antisemitic tendencies in its struggle against liberalism, capitalism and secularization. Protestantism, mostly closely tied to political and social conservatism, took quite a similar course in those countries where it represented the majority.

Wherever antisemitism emerged as a reasonably distinct factor in politics, it represented the first non-conservative protest movement against modern society, or the modernization tendencies in a society in transition. The prevailing social-political mood underpinning and sustaining antisemitic agitation was anti-liberal in every respect, and the supporting strata almost always belonged to those who felt threatened by the economic and social changes triggered by the technological-industrial revolution and capitalism's rapidly advancing penetration of all economic relations. In countries where the government and its agencies were politically liberal or at least welcomed modernization, antisemitic protest was able to also focus on state institutions. This also proved to be the case when conservative governments called in the military to protect Jewish communities in an effort to reassert public peace in the wake of anti-Jewish disturbances and riots.

Modern antisemitism sought to be a – relatively – independent political movement, looking to find a place next to or perhaps even above existing political parties. Initial attempts at organizing sought to position it above party lines, for instance as an "Antisemitic League", only to fail miserably everywhere. Attempts to stage "Antisemitic World Congresses" and to found an "Antisemitic International" ultimately proved unsuccessful. Specifically antisemitic parties who took part in general elections were founded only in a few European countries in the late 19th century. Even in countries where initial successes were achieved they never managed more than just a few percentage points of the vote, and overall one may consider those parties to be failures which saw themselves as "antisemitic parties" and placed antisemitism at the center of their programs. This does not rule out however that there were other parties, foremost those conservative and clerical in orientation, which sought to exploit the antisemitism pervading society for their own purposes, or even officially adopted antisemitic positions in their manifestos.

Alongside these attempts to establish organizations, generally a failure until the First World War, journalistic networks were developed between newspapers, journals and publishing houses which proved to be far more successful in spreading antisemitic ideas and programs in the mid- and even long-term. Not in every, but most certainly in many countries, there were skilled organizers or generous sponsors who made a decidedly antisemitic media policy possible before 1914. Aside from special constellations as in France, as a rule circulation was by no means spectacular, but there was a constant supply of antisemitic information and interpretations that kept the hard core of the antisemites interested while in a variety of contexts introducing casual or occasional readers to the world of antisemitic ideas. Since the 1870s and 1880s there was – for whoever was interested – an opportunity to become familiar with antisemitic ideas in a score of publication types: from flyers and pamphlets through to newspapers and journals, handbooks, scholarly or pseudo-scientific works, and not least novels and other forms of literature.

That modern antisemitism is more than a negative attitude towards the Jews living in the respective place or region is clearly evident in most case studies, albeit not all of them. As shown by a broadly scoped international comparison, modern antisemitism is in essence a political ideology. With the help of this ideology economic and social, political and cultural relations deemed undesirable and damaging are to be explained and overcome. The Jews are not only identified and presented as the main beneficiaries of the deplored developments but also as causing them. Whoever wants to change the world must therefore, so runs the logic of antisemitic ideology, get to the root of the problem, i.e. take up the fight against the Jews, their position and influence. The antisemitic "worldview" seeks to offer orientation and motivate followers to take corresponding action. In the process Jews are no longer defined as a religious community, but as an ethnic unit, an "alien peoples" or, referring to the power and interest-driven politics it was insinuated they pursue, a "state within the state." Despite the continuing presence of the old prejudices, the "Jewish question" no longer revolved around religious antagonisms instead it had turned into a "social question" and a "cultural question." The notion that Jews are a "race" is evident in different contexts, but for the period under study racist thinking was yet to take center stage in antisemitic agitation. The concept of race is still relatively vague and fluid at this stage, and many antisemites do not yet consider the "laws of race" to be principally irreversible. At the same time though, it is clear that thinking in racial categories, extending through to the construction of an unavoidable "racial conflict", a "struggle for survival" between Jews and their "host peoples", was increasingly gaining in currency on the eve of the First World War.

One decisive prerequisite for the antisemitic "worldview" was the notion that the Jews only seemed as if they were a small minority struggling for equality in society, while they actually possessed enormous economic and social power.

Complaints about "Jewish power", about the allegedly fateful "Jewish influence" or the "Jewish spirit" in modern economic and cultural life abounded in ever new variations. "Judea is a power. Antisemitism opposes it", is the lapidary statement given in the "Staatslexikon" put out by the Görres Society, an organization affiliated to political Catholicism in the German Empire.[3] In this setting antisemitic conspiracy theories were able to flourish unchecked – right through to notions of a "Jewish world conspiracy." What fundamentally distinguishes modern antisemitism from prejudices and aggression directed against other minorities is the conviction that Jews in the respective country, but also beyond the national borders, were all too powerful and therefore dangerous. Other minorities could be rejected and despised, stigmatized, socially excluded and even politically persecuted, but they were not considered dangerous in the same way, rather solely as undesirable and a nuisance.

The notions that the Jews were "alien" and "did not belong" linked into the European national movements over the course of the 19th century in a particular context, namely as these movements no longer saw themselves as an instrument of liberation from the old feudal structures of Europe and as a player in the pre-March "spring of the peoples"; instead, nationalist sentiments and organizations were concerned foremost with distinguishing their own nation from others, developing a frontline against the "enemies" of the nation, both domestically and internationally. When the process of nation-building was not based on the liberal program of the French Revolution, drawing instead on the shared descent, history, language and culture, the exclusion of minorities was an obvious consequence. This was by no means limited to the Jews, but they in particular were the objects of hate for radical nationalists in most European countries. To the national minorities struggling for their cultural and political independence in the Habsburg Monarchy and parts of Tsarist Russia, the Jews frequently seemed to be the beneficiaries of the prevailing power relations, and in the already established nation-states where the Jews were granted equal rights in the 19th century it was repeatedly doubted whether they really belonged to the nation. Not least because they were in many cases active beyond national boundaries economically and in familial relations, the Jewish minorities were seen as a factor threatening national security that was difficult to control. With the emergence of an integral and radical nationalism in Europe since the 1890s, nationalism and antisemitism became even more closely tied together; the potential threat to Jews carried by these nationalisms intensified greatly, and this was fully independent of any subjective view of Jewish individuals and groups.

[3] *Staatslexikon,* ed. Görres-Gesellschaft zur Pflege der Wissenschaft im katholischen Deutschland, vol. 3, (Freiburg: Herder, 1894), 530.

What was new since the late 19th century was the experience of anti-Jewish violence on a massive scale, with perpetrators not shying away from murder and outrages in Eastern and Southeastern Europe. Although in the period of emancipation a significant number of anti-Jewish outrages took place in Western and Central Europe, this was in the main "violence against property and possessions", the demolition of Jewish organizations, businesses and homes; fatalities were the exception. Moreover, these "excesses" almost always took place in the context of general political and social disturbances or revolutionary upheavals, so that once the situation settled down again social peace was also restored for the Jewish minority. From the beginning of the 1880s however, the character and dynamic of anti-Jewish violence in Europe changed as in the Russian Empire, in particular in the Southwestern provinces, anti-Jewish pogroms broke out, which in their scale and radical nature overshadowed everything hitherto experienced with the exception of the Ukrainian massacre of the mid-17th century, triggering the first great wave of emigration by Eastern European Jews to Central and Western Europe as well as in rapidly growing numbers to North America. After a seemingly calming of the situation in the 1890s, there followed a second wave of pogroms at the beginning of the 20th century, ignited in 1903 by events in Kishinev, Bessarabia. In this city – present-day Chisinau – the Jewish population made up almost 30% of residents, and in two days 700 buildings were set alight, 600 business plundered and 47 people murdered before the military intervened. The pogroms continued into the following year at numerous places and in 1905/06 reached their grim peak with riots at no less than 674 locations, during which 3000 people were murdered and around 17,000 injured.

The Russian Empire was undoubtedly the center of this new form of violence, but news of these acts of violence sent shockwaves throughout Europe. And there was open violence against Jews outside of Eastern Europe, for example on the Greek island of Corfu, where in 1891, after two months of riots and around 20 dead, almost a third of the Jewish inhabitants left the island, or in France where anti-Jewish disturbances were registered in many locations in the 1890s and the acts of violence continued on after the turn of the century. The First World War failed to bring about a turn for the good; instead, with the revolutions and civil wars following in its wake, as well as the founding of new states and the struggles between nationalities this entailed, new waves of persecution and violence ensued. The number of Jews murdered on the territory covering the former Tsarist Empire between 1917 and 1921 is usually set at 30,000, but many estimates put the number as much higher. Anti-Jewish riots also took place in Warsaw, Vilnius and Lviv in November 1918, in Moravia and Slovakia, in Hungary following the overthrow of the soviet council government, and at the beginning of the 1920s in Romania. A new period of insecurity began for Jews in Europe, while for antisemites the move from words to action became ever shorter, with violent and even murderous

solutions to the "Jewish question" as they defined it no longer seeming impossible.

Gathering all this evidence, the question emerges if one may speak of a new European antisemitism since the 1870s, or if we are not rather dealing with a host of anti-Jewish movements in European countries, each possessing its own unique features and at best only loosely connected with one another. The answer is not simple and no hasty judgments should be made. To begin with we need to keep in mind that a tradition of Christian animosity towards Jews had existed throughout Europe since the High Middle Ages, in both Protestant and Catholic countries and regions. The European Enlightenment and its liberal movement tried to overcome the negative image of "the Jew" and the associated distorting picture of Jewish life, but were only partially successful in Western and Central Europe, while in large parts of Eastern and Southeastern Europe traditional anti-Jewish notions continued to circulate almost unchanged, even when there was close economic contacts and peaceful coexistence between Christians and Jews over long periods.

What is generally characterized as "modern antisemitism" arose in those European countries which were more developed politically and socially, namely as a post-emancipation and post-liberal phenomenon, as a reaction to Jews achieving equal rights and at a point in time as liberalism's power to shape society and politics was diminishing, with conservative and clerical forces enjoying a revival. These preconditions are completely absent in Tsarist Russia. There were no strong liberal movements with a dominant position in public opinion, and there was no state pursuing a policy of emancipation, no equality before the law for Jews. In addition, Jews in the west and south of the Russian Empire not only represented a higher percentage of the population than in the rest of Europe, but actually formed large local and regional minorities in their settlement areas, at places even the majority, while in other countries they often lived scattered in very small communities and even in larger cities made up only a very small share of the population. The acculturation and assimilation process was far more developed in Britain, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy than in Eastern and Southeastern Europe. Despite all the discrimination still in evidence, Jews in these parts of Europe were largely integrated into the respective societies since the late 19$^{th}$ century, while the life of the large majority of Eastern European Jews remained determined by the traditional situation.

Given this combination of circumstances, the anti-Jewish or antisemitic intentions must demonstrate clear differences in their manifestation, objectives, activities and supporting groups. In addition, the specific conditions facilitating the rise of a political antisemitism – a political public sphere, the possibility of political organizations, the conducting of elections and generally the opportunity to influence politics "from below" – were generally lacking in

the Tsarist Empire. In this respect, it is extremely difficult to integrate the new antisemitism in the more advanced countries and the antisemitic movements in Eastern Europe into a unified interpretative framework. On the other hand, it remains striking that antisemitic tendencies came into prominence almost everywhere in the 1870s and 1880s, that antisemitic propagandists and their journalistic mouthpieces communicated with one another across a number of countries, that information was exchanged and events of interest for developing the antisemitic movement which took place beyond the border were closely observed and discussed. While there was certainly no controlling base which could have exerted a transnational influence, there were undoubtedly shared antisemitic fundamental convictions, which generally agreed with how this sentiment was summed up in Germany in 1879: "The Jews are our misfortune!"[4] From France to Ukraine, from Lithuania to Hungary, Romania or Greece, since late 19th century the Jew-haters were convinced that Jews were responsible for and the cause behind the economic and social conditions they complained about, if not solely than at the very least to a considerable degree. The antisemitic utopia therefore had the same objective in all European countries – a world without Jews. In this sense it appears, despite all the obvious differences, justified to speak of a new transnational European antisemitism. Considering the catastrophe of the 20th century, the murder of the European Jews, it becomes clear that the two main elements of the new antisemitism since the final 25 years of the 19th century, the antisemitic ideology, radicalized even further in the subsequent period, and massive violence against Jews, formed the decisive preconditions for the genocide of Jews living within the Nazi sphere of influence.

Like antisemitism research in general, comparative studies into antisemitism are always in danger of isolating its object of study. As a rule, whoever is on the lookout for antisemitism and antisemites will make a find, but at the same time may easily lose any sense of proportion. This already begins with the sources: because they disturb public order, antisemitic actions have a far greater chance of being recorded and passed on than the peaceful cooperation or even coexistence between Jews and Christians. Whoever goes out on the street and screams or breaks laws attracts attention; whoever goes about their business without creating such a spectacle remains unnoticed. A rumor of ritual murder with all its turmoil and fears, the gathering of a riotous mob and outbreak of excesses, will produce, even when things calm down after a few days, far more official documents than thirty years of conflict-free coexistence. The danger that in this way antisemitic activities can come into focus as if under a magnifying glass, is even greater in international comparative studies than local, regional or national undertakings because the aim in the first instance is to gather and analyze as much detailed information about antisemites and antisemitics incidents as possible, entailing studious effort by

[4] Heinrich von Treitschke, "Unsere Aussichten," *Preußische Jahrbücher*, 44 (1879), 575.

researchers that cannot always be repeated for the broader social conditions. It is therefore with good reason that calls for more contextualization are becoming louder within antisemitism research in recent times.

It is still the case that too little is known about the "silent majority" in the individual countries. Moreover, too seldom distinctions are drawn between anti-Jewish prejudices and antisemitic attitudes. Negative "images of Jews", religious and social prejudices towards Jews, were widespread in Europe, including the camps of the bourgeois liberals and the socialist labor movement. The situation could not be expected to be any different given the centuries-old anti-Jewish traditions deeply rooted in folk culture. Such prejudices are not without consequences in a modern or a modernizing society, but they are not the same as modern antisemitism, which is programmatic and focused on taking action, not only cultivating a social distance to Jews but committed to changing the world by combating the Jews. There are many examples of liberals and democrats who actively supported the emancipation of Jews and campaigned against antisemitism, but also confessed that they themselves were not free of prejudice against Jews. The situation was similar for many socialists who not only fought resolutely against antisemitism in theory but also in practice, while in a surprising and often appalling manner they took advantage of private correspondence or "off-the-record" statements to use anti-Jewish clichés.

Reports and accounts of anti-Jewish excesses always mention that – albeit frequently after a noticeable delay – the military was sent in to deal with the perpetrators of violence. Overall, too little attention is given to the opposing forces in the individual studies however, those forces which did not think or act in antisemitic terms, and took a stand against antisemitism. Even conservative and reactionary governments mobilized the state's power to put an end to antisemitic disturbances. In most parliaments majorities supported equal rights for Jews and opposed antisemitic machinations. The radical antisemites were almost always isolated in political life. There were anti-Jewish, even antisemitic tendencies in the large Christian denominations at the turn from the 19th to the 20th century, but it is unclear to what extent the respective "church members" were influenced. Even political Catholicism represented only a section of the Catholic population in the respective countries, other Catholics feeling more affinity to the liberal, democratic or socialist camps. Above all in the cities, but also at national or individual state elections, Jews were elected by a majority of non-Jewish voters in more developed countries. Between 1881 and 1914, around 10% of the deputies making up the Social Democrat Reichstag faction were Jewish or recognizably of Jewish descent (and that with a Jewish share of the population of merely 1%, which moreover due to its predominantly bourgeois structure was hardly viable as potential voters for a socialist party). Furthermore, with Paul Singer (until 1911) and Hugo Haase (until 1916) one of the two party chairmen and leaders of the

Reichstag faction – at the side of August Bebel and later Friedrich Ebert – were Jewish. This constellation did not prevent the Social Democrats from becoming the strongest faction at the elections to the German Reichstag in 1912.

On the eve of the First World War Jews were no longer outsiders in numerous European states, but actively involved in shaping politics and society. Their presence in secondary schools, including for girls, the number of students at universities and in specific academic professional groups was outstanding, their role in economic and cultural life so prominent that the antisemites declared their own position to be that of an apparently necessary defensive action against "Jewish superiority." Prejudices and discrimination had not disappeared, but they neither hindered individual successes nor the social advancement of the Jewish minority. Jews performed military service like all other citizens, but in most states they were barred from taking an officer's career, and in Prussia they were also denied access to the coveted reserve officer commissions. There were though famous exceptions, and precisely inn that state where modern antisemitism was more virulent than in other countries: in the Austro-Hungarian Army almost one thousand Jews were promoted to the officers' ranks up until 1910, 19 of them to that of general, and by around 1900 every fifth reserve officer was Jewish.

Whereas in Eastern Europe until 1914 and beyond minority status was never disputed for the majority of the Jewish population – they were perceived by the majority population as a clearly definable minority –, in large parts of Western and Central Europe the situation was different. In statistics Jews continued to be counted as a religious minority, but affiliation to Judaism was no longer considered the overarching factor for being Jewish. Religion had become a "confession" – "Jewish", "Israelite", "Mosaic" – and thus no longer the sole defining characteristic of identity. A Jew was now at the same time a German as well, was French or Italian, a bourgeois or a proletariat, an entrepreneur, academic or tradesman. Politically a Jew was conservative, liberal or socialist, was involved in interest groups and associations, and was poor, rich or middle-class. A Jew belonged to very different social majorities as well as minorities, and in terms of life within the Jewish community there was no lack of diversity and controversy between liberal and orthodox Jews, Zionists and German nationalists, modernizers and traditionalists. It was only in the eyes of the antisemites that the Jews were a clearly definable group, and even they were alarmed by the fact that many Jews had become "invisible", i.e. as the assimilation process continued apace they were no longer identifiable as such.

The extent to which Jews were integrated into general society is not least discernible by considering the rise of denominational "mixed marriages" between Jews and Christians in the first decades of the 20th century. Up until

the end of the 19th century "mixed marriages" played an insignificant role statistically, and one reason for this was that when a Jew and Christian wanted to get married one of the them – in practice almost always the Jewish partner – had to convert to the other denomination as long as the institution of the "civil marriage" had yet to be established. A large percentage of "mixed marriages" were concluded since the turn of the century in Italy and the Netherlands, while the number continued to remain low in Eastern Europe. In most states the "mixed marriage rate" – the number from one hundred Jewish persons marrying a non-Jewish partner – fluctuated in the 1920s, ranging from 22 in Germany to 13 in Hungary, whereby the numbers in large cities – and this also holds for Eastern Europe – was always much higher than in small towns. Extreme figures were recorded at the beginning of the century with 32 in Copenhagen and in 1927 with no less than 56 in Trieste. If in large parts of Europe the partner of every fifth person getting married was from the majority society, then the line separating the majority from the minority could no longer have been so clear cut in everyday life.

Looking at how the life of the Jewish population in the various European countries developed shows that, despite all the radical agitation, the discrimination in everyday life and the acts of violence, the impact of modern antisemitism remained limited. For Jews, experiencing antisemitism was part of everyday life, but in the decades up for discussion here antisemitism was not a dominating factor in their lives. It prevented neither achievements nor successes, and it did not seem to seriously threaten the future of coming generations. Many Jewish organizations nevertheless openly waged a struggle against all antisemitic tendencies, while others believed that they could ignore antisemitism. What was graver and had greater consequences was the long-term impact of the rise and spread of modern antisemitism. Alone the fact that antisemitic movements formed in almost every European country and developed simultaneously albeit differently, was taken by antisemites as a sign confirming their basic ideological positions. While at the beginning of the 20th century antisemitism was certainly not a dominant element, it was obviously a component of political and social life in Europe. With the war, which ended in defeat for large parts of Central and Eastern Europe, the revolutionary upheavals and civil wars, the economic and social crises triggered by mass unemployment and inflation, antisemitic currents gained new impetus. Until 1933 they were more successful in some countries than in Germany, for instance in Poland and Hungary, but this changed dramatically when, following the Nazi "seizure of power", radical racist antisemitism came to unrestricted power for the first time in Europe. From now on it was clear that the rhetoric would be turned into action. The path to genocide was not marked out in advance from the outset, but there could be no doubt that Jews no longer had a future in Germany, and later in all areas of Europe occupied by the German Army. That there were many "willing helpers" to the Nazi murdering in many European countries and regions – this is also part of the long-term

repercussions of antisemitism in the decades immediately prior to the First World War.

**Reinhard Rürup**, born in 1934 in Rehme (Westphalia), Emeritus professor of History at the Technical University Berlin.
He studied History and German Literature in Freiburg and Göttingen and completed his Ph.D. on Johann Jakob Moser and the German Pietism. From 1975 to 1999 he taught history at the Technical University Berlin. He was visting professor in Berkeley, Stanford, Harvard and Jerusalem, director of the Documentation Center 'Topographie des Terrors' in Berlin and director of the Wissenschaftliche Arbeitsgemeinschaft of the Leo Baeck Institute.
Among his numerous publications: *Emanzipation und Antisemitismus. Studien zur 'Judenfrage' der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft*, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1975); *Deutschland im 19. Jahrhundert 1815-1871* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1984); *Die Revolution von 1918-19 in der deutschen Geschichte*, (Bonn: Historisches Forschungszentrum, 1993); ed. *Jüdische Geschichte in Berlin*, 2 Vol., (Berlin: Edition Hentrich, 1995); *The Problem of Revolution in Germany*, 1789–1989, (Oxford: Berg, 2000).

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