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## Anti-Semitism as a Political Tool of Tyrannical Government

Bailey Gordon

*Coastal Carolina University*, [brgordon@coastal.edu](mailto:brgordon@coastal.edu)

Kimberly Hale

[khale1@coastal.edu](mailto:khale1@coastal.edu)

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# Anti-Semitism as a Political Tool for Tyrannical Governments

By

Bailey Gordon

Political Science

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Louis E. Keiner

Director of Honors

HTC Honors College

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Kimberly Hale

Assistant Professor

Politics

College of Humanities and Fine Arts

Anti-Semitism has been a form of hatred and racism among movements and governmental organizations since Babylonian times.<sup>1</sup> It was institutionalized however in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries as a form of political tool to garner support for tyrannical establishments. Although anti-Semitism has been around for centuries, it has been used more recently to rally people in a tribal-nationalistic spirit. As the populace becomes normalized to anti-Semitic beliefs, they eventually become more accepting of a tyrannical government whose policies are rooted in anti-Semitism. To appease the masses, this tyrannical government must then stay in motion. This constant need for moving forward, as well as wielding limitless power, leads these organizations to become more hostile in their principles and brings its supporters to accept its decisions without hesitation.

The Pan Movements in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries were communities of individuals, otherwise known as “mobs,” with similar ethnicities and without their own state. Their states had been conquered during the time of foreign imperialism, yet they were not assimilated into these cultures. Nationalistic rhetoric had led many major ethnic groups to separate themselves from these newly formed minorities within their communities. This separation of minorities from their conquerors led the unassimilated ethnic groups to band together in these Pan Movements, whose ideologies were shaped to focused on their ethnic group as being the “chosen culture.” During the genesis of these movements, people of Jewish ancestry were heavily involved along with their minority brethren. As the movements gained momentum, their leaders soon realized that the main obstacle in their path of absolute chosenness was in fact the Jewish community and their ancestral claim of being God’s “Chosen People.” This led anti-Semitism into being one of the

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<sup>1</sup> “A Brief History of Anti-Semitism,” *Anti-Defamation League*, 2013, <https://www.adl.org/sites/default/files/documents/assets/pdf/education-outreach/Brief-History-on-Anti-Semitism-A.pdf>, 1.

main pillars of the later movements, which was used to garner support for their political actions. The Pan Movements lacked in organization and structure and soon fell apart as they had not understood the effectiveness of anti-Semitism as a political tool. The disbandment of the mob paved the way for former mob leaders to organize the masses in a way to effectively use what the mob had not. Anti-Semitism would become a political tool during the 20<sup>th</sup> century by some of the most popular mob leaders. Their movements used anti-Semitism efficiently enough to garner abundant support among the masses. This support would consequently lead to policies and governance that would later involve the full exclusion and removal of the Jewish community, eventually leading to genocide.<sup>2</sup>

The 20<sup>th</sup> century brought about mass movements of political activists whose ideologies centered around anti-Semitic policies, surpassing less successful activists in support of the Jewish community. The most famous of these movements gained quick popularity in post-WWI Germany, known infamously as the Nazi Party. Organizations, such as the Nazi Party, found swift and easy founding out of defeated peoples in need of a strong organization or leader to guide them to stability, dignity, and a belief of chosenness. After the first World War, the German people were perfect candidates for a tyrannical organization to sprout. The newly established Nazi party focused on the hatred of Jews because it gave the German people someone to look down upon and blame for their misfortunes. Adolf Hitler, the leader of the Nazi Party, had come from the mob of the previous era and had learned how to effectively use anti-Semitism as a political tool in gaining the support of these people in a state of woe. This use of anti-Semitism would effectively distract the German population from its problems and give them

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<sup>2</sup> Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1973). Pp 224-43.

the hope of being more than what the world now viewed them as.<sup>3</sup> This blind following of the organization gave the party limitless power over governing policies of the state. As masses push for more power over their neighbors and believe more in their own chosenness over others, their government must continually establish more aggressive policies rooted in anti-Semitic practices.<sup>4</sup>

As more anti-Semitic policies are passed, the ethnic majority of the state becomes more accepting and willing to follow them. The majority groups then become increasingly normalized to the hatred of the Jewish community. Consequently, anti-Semitism becomes a regular policy within the state's governance, leaving no limit on its ability to pass anti-Semitic policies. This constant motion of the government then leads to more hostile policies being placed. Over time, anti-Semitic policies expand from a limited position within the country's borders, to conflicting with the surrounding nations over their own Jewish populations. Conflict between nations results in war, thus culminating in the genocide of Jewish communities.<sup>5</sup> As anti-Semitic ideologies first sprang from Pan Movements, it was later used as a political tool in the organizations of the masses. The aftermath of this ideology leads to an overwhelming persecution of the Jewish community and the eventual acceptance of the removal and extermination of an entire race.

### **Friction between Judaism and Pan Movements**

The Pan Movements first developed during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries as a result of continental imperialism on the part of major political powers, such as Russia and Austria-Hungary. As these major foreign nations continued their expansion, several groups of

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<sup>3</sup> Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 224-43.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

displaced minorities with common ethnicities began to unify within political movements. These movements started from peoples' natural desires to belong, this feeling later being known as tribal nationalism.<sup>6</sup> The mutual desires of these displaced groups resulted in the "mob movements," whose membership consisted of a strong sense of identification to the movement, rather than with their new governing nation. From this feeling of being outcasted, the Pan Movements caught fire. Within the group, the leaders formed a sense of being "surrounded by a 'world of enemies,' 'one against all,' that a fundamental difference exists between this people and all others."<sup>7</sup> This distinction created the concept of "chosenness" between those involved in the mobs, however this new ideology in the movements clashed severely with an already thriving "chosen" group, the Jewish peoples. The Jewish community, being historically acknowledged as God's "chosen people" along with their resilience throughout time of cultural identity, became the main obstacle of the Pan Movements in achieving their ideology of self-proclaimed chosenness.<sup>8</sup> The mob movements eventually dispersed due to a lack of organizational structure and an inability to overcome the conflict in ideologies. The strongest of the mob's leaders later fashioned new political organizations from the masses, expanding larger and faster than the mob movements ever had. The new leaders of the masses had understood the mob movement's failures, leading them to develop the use of anti-Semitic practices into their own politics. This resulted in cultivating it as an ideology for political advancement.<sup>9</sup>

*From Mobs to Masses*

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<sup>6</sup> Arendt, 226.

<sup>7</sup> Arendt, 227.

<sup>8</sup> Arendt, 240.

<sup>9</sup> Peter G. J. Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany & Austria* (Harvard University Press, 1988), x.

The Pan Movements of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, otherwise known as “mobs,” sprouted during the time of foreign Imperialism. The occupying foreign nations had refused to assimilate the conquered peoples into their cultures. This led to the development of the movements as a means for the newly conquered individuals of smaller states to join a community of similarly ethnic peoples. The mob’s strength during this time came solely from the selflessness of its members. The selflessness of individuals within the mob allowed it to make great waves that conflicted with their conquering nations’ governance. These individuals are characterized through their loyalty and conviction to the movement, separating themselves from people who do not belong to it. The true selflessness of the mob however is that they do not waver, even as “the monster begins to devour its own children.”<sup>10</sup> Arendt uses this phrase to describe the ability of leaders in such movements to manipulate the mindset of its members to evolve from the belief that persecution of individuals outside the party is deserved, to persecution within the party becoming a necessity as well. These individuals with undying loyalties would not only accept their possible demise, but even go so far as to help in their impending death sentence, “only if his status as a member of the movement is not touched.”<sup>11</sup> Members of the movement had such devotion that they could not be enthused by argument nor experience; their allegiance to the movement superseding any need for understanding.<sup>12</sup> The type of individuals within the mob were influenced by the movement in such a way that it allowed the mobs to gain quick momentum with a dedicated base. Although the mob movements had such a strong following, they lacked direction and organization, only just scratching the surface of realization on how anti-Semitism could play a part in politics. Contrarily, there were several instances of conflicts

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<sup>10</sup> Arendt, 307.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Arendt, 308.

known as “Pogroms” in Russia. These violent anti-Semitic mobs rioted and killed several thousand Jewish peoples, however they were ill-organized and lacked any coherent ideological direction to create a viable organization.<sup>13</sup> The Pan Movements perceived the Jewish community as, “the luckier competitors who had inherited something, were recognized for something which Gentiles had to build from scratch,” however this was the extent of their anti-Semitic concerns.<sup>14</sup> The mob movements eventually dispersed, leaving the most influential and strong leaders to encroach on the newly growing masses of the population. As the new leaders of the masses had experienced the failures of the mob movements first-hand and the rising public acceptance of anti-Semitic conflicts, they learned how to successfully run a political organization by focusing on anti-Semitism as the main pillar of their ideology and as a means of garnering political support.<sup>15</sup>

The term “masses” applies to a group of people who by sheer number, indifference, or both, do not and cannot belong to any current organization based on common interests.<sup>16</sup> Although the masses comprised the majority of each state, political groups had previously ignored their potential. The political movements of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century capitalized on this untapped mass number of voters, which resulted in the movement being able to quickly garner support and momentum. Not only did the masses have the strength of sheer numbers, but they also consisted of “highly cultured people.”<sup>17</sup> Within the masses, sophistication had become a burden of “self-hatred;” their intellect allowing them to understand their societies class structures, yet they remained in isolation. The movements’ leaders were able to recruit large

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<sup>13</sup> “A Brief History of Anti-Semitism,” 1.

<sup>14</sup> Arendt, 241.

<sup>15</sup> Arendt, 224-43.

<sup>16</sup> Arendt, 311.

<sup>17</sup> Arendt, 316.

groups of intelligent members from the masses, which ultimately helped the movements organize into a stronger structure, increasing their stability and allowing for political organizations to form. The movements' leaders gained even more momentum, as they had learned from the Pan Movements failures that nationalism and individualism were not the roots of a capable totalitarian movement. The mass movements instead promoted community and equality between their leaders and members.<sup>18</sup> The mass movements were thus the first organizations to rightly claim that they were the first antibourgeois parties. This can be seen when comparing the difference of individualism within the mob and masses. The mob was still able to connect with the bourgeois attitude, as they inherently accepted the "standards and attitudes of the dominating class," while the masses came to a complete loss of individualistic claims and ambitions, their standards of class disintegrating into the "all-persuasive influences and convictions which were tacitly and inarticulately shared by all classes of society alike."<sup>19</sup> The masses thrived on this concept of equality amongst its members. They understood that the leader needed the masses to be able to gain any power, as well as the masses needed a leader to direct their inept being. This notion of equality is what gave the totalitarian movement of the 20th century their power and relatability.<sup>20</sup>

Aside from the differences in the make-up of the mob and masses, there is one characteristic that these movements both shared, "[they] both stand outside all social ramifications and normal political representation."<sup>21</sup> The individuals that made up the masses and the mob were able to fully commit to their movements due to both groups already being completely isolated from society with no direction. With no "social ties to family, friends,

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<sup>18</sup> Arendt, 325.

<sup>19</sup> Arendt, 314.

<sup>20</sup> Arendt, 325.

<sup>21</sup> Arendt, 314.

comrades, or even mere acquaintances,” the movement fulfilled their needs to belong.<sup>22</sup> By nature, humans tend to crave a sense of cultural identity or belonging. As the masses of society fell into isolation outside of social and class structures, they were prime candidates for totalitarian movements, which in turn satisfied their need for purpose. The main difference between the mob of the 19th century and the masses of the 20th century do not however come from their psychology, nor their leaders mentality, but by their difference in attitude to the bourgeoisie and class structure.<sup>23</sup> The ideologies of both movements had anti-Semitic overtones, however the movement of the masses’ politics were able to capitalize on the removal of class structures. This created a shared sense of equality within the group, thus leading members to accept as true the importance of each and every involved individual. From this atmosphere of equality within the movement, an inherent belief soon arose among individual members who systematically began to believe in their innate chosenness by God. The leaders of the masses gained momentum and support for their movements from this emphasis on cultural individuality and intrinsic chosenness, coupled along with policies of anti-Semitism that allowed the movements to effectively rival their biggest ideological competitor. In summation, the mobs’ resolve created the masses, and the masses eventually grew powerful enough to change the dynamic structure of the state.

### *God’s Chosen People*

The Pan Movements had first conceptualized the idea of being “God’s chosen people” as a pillar of their political ideology in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. They failed to effectively sustain this as

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<sup>22</sup> Arendt, 323-24.

<sup>23</sup> Arendt, 313-14.

an ideology however when presented with the obstacle of Judaism and its historical claim as God's one and only chosen people.<sup>24</sup> The mob proved incapable of overcoming this obstacle, so it dissolved. This led to the creation of the mass movements in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, which were able to successfully adapt the use of anti-Semitism into their ideology.<sup>25</sup> Previous mob leaders had learned from their failures in the Pan Movements and recognized the promise in supporting their claim to chosenness with the introduction of anti-Semitism into their ideology. Based off this coupling, the leaders of the masses were able to galvanize mass support for their movements.

Anti-Semitism was not a new concept in public attitudes, as it has even been called "history's oldest hatred."<sup>26</sup> The term "anti-Semitism" however was first popularized by German journalist Wilhelm Marr in 1879, described as the hatred or hostility against Jews.<sup>27</sup> The hatred of the Jewish peoples had become more relevant during the time of the Pan and mass movements, resurfaced due to the conflict between their ideologies. The mob and mass movements focalized on their ideological claim to chosenness, but where the mob failed, the masses adapted. They were able to cultivate a sense of unity through the riddance of class systems, ultimately seeding each member's individual belief of their own importance and chosenness within the movement. They also adapted their movement to vocalize an established hatred against the Jewish community. This allowed for the mass movements to use Jews as a scapegoat, blaming the movements' individual and general struggles on them. It also shaped a shared common interest among each member. The movements' anti-Semitic ideology was based not only on Judaism's claim to chosenness, but the culture's ability to remain intact despite centuries of oppression, restrictions, and removal from their homelands. The history of the Jews'

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<sup>24</sup> Arendt, 233.

<sup>25</sup> Arendt, 325.

<sup>26</sup> "A Brief History of Anti-Semitism," 2.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

struggles paralleled to that of the movements during this time, leading the movements' members to develop hatred based off of conflicting ideologies. Anti-Semitism became "emotional and instinctive... It was not based on a judgement but on a prejudice; not on knowledge, but on instincts."<sup>28</sup>

The hatred of Jewish peoples became popularized during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, expressed mainly through the masses. Their antipathy initially stemmed from the Jewish communities distinguishing themselves as different from all other nations and peoples. The masses envied how the Jews had lasted so long in being a people with no nation or governance, whilst still retaining their national identity for centuries. The Jews ability to preserve their claim of chosenness for centuries became the main obstacle in the movements' ideological basis. The movements' own claims to chosenness evolved into the belief of the definitive that any one not of their people, were "God's foes."<sup>29</sup> The idea of being a chosen people created the essence of having the divine right of God's graces, the problem being that the Jewish community had been living of this origin for thousands of years. For anti-Semites, Jews represented everything they disliked, feared, and envied. Anti-Semitism became so rampant during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century that it began to "bore some of the characteristics of a religion."<sup>30</sup> Deep, prolonged hatred twisted the perception of how the masses saw the Jewish peoples, their beliefs spiraling beyond empirical proof. These outlandish beliefs became accepted as "articles of faith," providing answers to "mystifying events, assuaged insecurities, and satisfied everyday psychological demands."<sup>31</sup> The Pan movement's deep-rooted beliefs of community, equality, and chosenness would all come

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<sup>28</sup> Bruce F. Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution: A History of Austrian Anti-Semitism* (Univ of North Carolina Press, 1998), 1-2.

<sup>29</sup> Arendt, 233.

<sup>30</sup> Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution*, 1.

<sup>31</sup> Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution*, 1-2.

together as a rivalling ideology to Judaism. Their newly created ideology would later be coined as “tribal nationalism,” which can be defined as a stateless culture’s entitlement to identity through a deep-rooted claim to chosenness.

### *Tribal Nationalism*

The conquering Imperialist nations began to see a surge in nationalism amidst their native populations in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, due to the ever-increasing minority groups within their expanding borders. The revival of nationalistic behaviors within these majority populations led people to push their government into preventing minorities from being assimilated into their culture. They believed that only native-born citizens deserved citizenry and the rights of the nation. As minorities scrambled to find some sort of identity within their new governing nations, nationalistic rhetoric also began to spread among them too, ultimately unifying similar ethnic communities into groups or movements. The separation of minorities from their conquering nation’s populace led to the creation of the Pan Movements, whose ideologies tended to focus on their individual culture as being the “chosen culture.”<sup>32</sup> The idea of a chosen culture came to be because these minority groups were stuck in an identity crisis. This crisis was rooted in the resistance of imperial nations to assimilate the conquered peoples into their own culture, whilst simultaneously destroying their previous cultural identities by overthrowing their home states. This separation eventually formed large groups of outsider minorities without a national or cultural identity. A new type of nationalistic rhetoric would

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<sup>32</sup> Arendt, 122-43.

subsequently engulf the outsiders' ideologies and be branded as "tribal nationalism."<sup>33</sup> This ideological theory gave minorities a cultural identity or purpose as well as a claim to chosenness.

The problem these ideological movements soon faced became the force that ultimately led to their disbandment. The ideology of Judaism conflicted with these movements, becoming their main competitor in the claim to chosenness. The movements so envied the Jewish community that they desired to attain the successes in tribal nationalism that the Jewish community had already enjoyed through any means necessary.<sup>34</sup> The Pan Movements originally encompassed all individuals loyal enough to carry out their goals, however the introduction of anti-Semitic ideologies soon arose and forced Jewish members to dispel from the movements, consequently polarizing the movement's ideologies further. The pride of being a people singled out from the world were these movements' core claims to identity. If they had allowed for the Jewish community to share this distinctiveness with them, then their ideology would be lost, as there can only be one chosen people.<sup>35</sup> Tribal nationalism began from an outsider's hope to find cultural identity and liberation in an unforgiving, unaccepting world, but this nationalism of liberation would soon transform into a nationalism of domination. By forming and accepting an ideology that specified a culture's uniqueness and chosenness from the world, these movements had subsequently created their own conflict with the Jewish culture. The changes minority groups faced from the reality of losing their nation and culture led to nationalistic rhetoric that sought to preserve their culture. This "normal" ideology however that formed from tribal nationalism soon gave way to excessive behavior, resulting in progressively hostile racism

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<sup>33</sup> Arendt, 224.

<sup>34</sup> Arendt, 241.

<sup>35</sup> Arendt, 233.

towards their ideological neighbors.<sup>36</sup> The ideology of chosenness within the Pan Movements rhetoric was considered incompatible with the Jewish culture. This obstacle proved to shatter the mob movements and reveal their structural instabilities, however it also paved the way for mob members who understood the importance of the Jew's conflicting ideologies in the success of a movement. A new tribal nationalistic rhetoric was soon cultivated that relied on the conflict between the two cultures as a main pillar of the movements ideology. As a result of these principles, anti-Semitism would become a political tool.

### **Anti-Semitism as a Political Tool**

Anti-Semitic rhetoric is known to have been around since the beginning of the religion's founding.<sup>37</sup> The emergence of anti-Semitism as a political tool however emerged during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>38</sup> This development was brought on by conditions that had not existed in previous centuries, namely the first world war and the devastation it brought onto the whole of Europe. Influential leaders arose during these harsh times, exploiting the social and economic upheaval that followed the aftermath of the Great War.<sup>39</sup> The majority of Europe was in turmoil, which allowed for the emergence of radical movements to garner support within the displaced and disheartened communities. The rising mob leaders capitalized on the instability of broken-down countries by promising a return of hope and dignity to the devastated masses. The success of movements such as these however came not from their promises, but from their solutions. By providing the Jewish populace as a scapegoat to blame for the losses of war, these mob leaders

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<sup>36</sup> Etienne Balibar, *Nations and Nationalism: A Reader – Racism and Nationalism* (Rutgers University Press, 2005), 163-64.

<sup>37</sup> "A Brief History of Anti-Semitism," 1.

<sup>38</sup> Peter G. J. Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany & Austria* (Harvard University Press, 1988), ix.

<sup>39</sup> Editors, "Anti-Semitism."

created a viable solution, or at least a reasoning, for the masses problems. Shifting the blame of a country's woes onto the Jews, as well as presenting an ideology of being God's chosen people, allowed for radical movements to gain quick momentum within the political sphere of demolished nations seeking dignity and relief.<sup>40</sup>

The most infamous of these movements were spearheaded by previously powerful mob leaders, Hitler and Stalin, "who would in turn use these racist ideals of tribal nationalism to rally their people against the Jewish state."<sup>41</sup> These leaders of infamy were able to organize political parties solely on the basis of anti-Semitism, going so far as to set up a "coherent set of ideas... [drawn] on the support of science" to explain their parties reasoning on their hatred of Jews.<sup>42</sup> These ideas became so widespread during the time that the term "anti-Semitism" made its first appearance in popular use in 1879. "Within a decade of 1914 these mildewed controversies were resurrected as the prophecies of a new civilization."<sup>43</sup> Anti-Semitic based political organizations became widely accepted within central Europe, the most popularly supported and well-organized movement being the Nazi Party in Germany. The first use of anti-Semitism as a political tool to garner support was cemented in history by these mass movements, however this ideology would only intensify. As these movements developed into political organizations, even progressing to the point of becoming a nation's governing structure, anti-Semitic ideologies would continually evolve alongside them. This evolution would continue "as an instrument for forcing the directions of foreign policy and disrupting... the internal structures of the state."<sup>44</sup> In due course, the evolution becomes exponential, going so far as to erode people's common sense of humanity

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<sup>40</sup> Arendt, 237.

<sup>41</sup> Arendt, 238.

<sup>42</sup> Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany & Austria*, ix.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Arendt, 238.

by normalizing the oppression of Jews, eventually leading the public to accept the genocide of an entire culture of people.<sup>45</sup>

### *Evolution of Anti-Semitic Politics*

Following World War I, the 1920s proved tribal nationalism as an effective ideology. The decade was filled with racial and ethnic tension between minority groups and devastated peoples. John Higham described this period as the “tribal twenties,” due to the overwhelming rise of “private social discrimination that spilled into the public realm.”<sup>46</sup> The first World War wreaked havoc on an international scale, reaching as far as the New World. Anti-Semitism entered the American public sphere through the use of propaganda, consequently changing the impression Americans felt for Jews. This led for them to be regarded as “different, alien, and inferior.”<sup>47</sup> Not only did propaganda allow for this to happen, but the Jewish claim to divine chosenness led to the Jews segregating themselves from society. This divide between Jews and gentiles separated the Jewish minority from all other minorities as well, making their people the “white other.” As national tribalism spread rampant through the international scope, the negation of citizen rights encompassed the Jewish community as well.<sup>48</sup>

In the United States during this time, anti-Semitism swept nationalistic rhetoric. In Henry Ford’s newspaper, the *Dearborn Independent*, he published a series of anti-Semitic articles attacking and spreading slanderous lies and conspiracies about Jewish elites. The divide between

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<sup>45</sup> Arendt, 338.

<sup>46</sup> Victoria Woeste, *Henry Ford’s War on Jews and the Legal Battle Against Hate Speech* (United States: Stanford University Press, 2012), 6.

<sup>47</sup> Woeste, *Henry Ford’s War on Jews and the Legal Battle Against Hate Speech*, 3.

<sup>48</sup> Woeste, *Henry Ford’s War on Jews and the Legal Battle Against Hate Speech*, 6.

the Jewish peoples became conflicted in the stop of Ford's rhetoric, as his apology statement was written by Louis Marshall, a Jewish civil rights leader and lawyer.<sup>49</sup> These Jewish individuals should have been allies, and if there was more cooperation between Jewish elites, anti-Semitic rhetoric could have ceased. The internal disputes of the Jewish community, paired with the uncertainty surrounding speech rights, furthered the evolution of anti-Semitism's extent into the public sphere.<sup>50</sup> Ford's newspaper "engulfed the nation in the logic of anti-Semitism, liberated it, pushed it beyond private social exchange into open air, and sought to institutionalize it in how Americans thought about their government and society."<sup>51</sup> Just like in the United States, ideologies centered on anti-Semitic practices gained momentum and popularity due to the tensions of the Great War and the introduction of movements that encompassed these ideals.

Many nations across the globe were fixated on the use of anti-Semitic policies and their ability as a tool to garner political power. In Hungary, Nazi occupation of the area "removed all the political obstacles to the anti-Semitic course they had long contemplated."<sup>52</sup> Hungarian nationalistic rhetoric had already pushed native citizens to see Jews as "traitors" and "alien subversives,"<sup>53</sup> as these issues had "assumed a central place in the public discourse of national political leaders."<sup>54</sup> The introduction of Nazi politics allowed for a change in political dynamic where Hungary's radical right parties were able to strip citizenship and rights from Jewish inhabitants, as well as organize their deportation to German work or death camps with little to no public backlash.<sup>55</sup> Anti-Semitism had captivated peoples across the world, creating an aura of

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<sup>49</sup> Woeste, *Henry Ford's War on Jews and the Legal Battle Against Hate Speech*, 1.

<sup>50</sup> Woeste, *Henry Ford's War on Jews and the Legal Battle Against Hate Speech*, 8.

<sup>51</sup> Woeste, *Henry Ford's War on Jews and the Legal Battle Against Hate Speech*, 3

<sup>52</sup> Paul A. Hanebrink, *In Defense of Christian Hungary: Religion, Nationalism, and Antisemitism, 1890-1944* (Cornell University Press, 2006), 198.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> Herf, *Divided Memory*, 3.

<sup>55</sup> Hanebrink, *In Defense of Christian Hungary*, 198.

acceptance of the persecution of Jewish peoples. As organizations centered their ideologies on these types of practices, the Nazi Party used it as a cause for national renewal. The Nazi party engendered constant growth with their anti-Semitic policies to remain in power and change their nation's dynamic.<sup>56</sup> This led to the persecution of Jews to expand exponentially, becoming more horrific with each new policy implementation. "Though this vision evolved into genocide only incrementally, by 1941 it stood at the 'center of the Nazi war effort,' a 'strategic imperative' that connected a war of extermination against the Jews to the catastrophic war that Nazi Germany was waging against the Allies."<sup>57</sup>

#### *Anti-Semitic Propaganda and Outcomes*

Political elites had understood by this point the importance of anti-Semitic politics. They had also cultivated "the art of the effective lie (in order to manipulate the psychology of the masses) and the art of revealing the truth of their plan of persecution."<sup>58</sup> In Germany's case, Hitler pushed anti-Semitic rhetoric claiming that the Jews intended to exterminate the Germans, so his solution was to exterminate them first. Anti-Semitism became an "instrument of war and diplomacy;" where predictions and paranoia became political tools, consequently leading to the acceptance of mass murders.<sup>59</sup> Anti-Semitic propaganda created conspiracies and myths of the Jewish culture whilst simultaneously destroying the current historical knowledge of the time. Through the use of reductivism, relativization, manipulation, interpolation, and negation, anti-

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<sup>56</sup> Philip Spencer and Howard Wollman, *Nations and Nationalism: A Reader* (Rutgers University Press, 2005), 44.

<sup>57</sup> Hanebrink, *In Defense of Christian Hungary*, 199.

<sup>58</sup> Michele Battini, *Socialism of Fools: Capitalism and Modern Anti-Semitism* (United States: Columbia University Press, 2016), 9.

<sup>59</sup> Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*, 2.

Semitic organizations capitalized on the denial of proven facts, promoting the falsification and elimination of historical facts and the acceptance of said falsities. Ultimately, this overturns the relationship between reality and fiction, making it hard for the public sphere to distinguish between the truth of history and the exaggerations, stereotypes, and lies.<sup>60</sup>

Anti-Semitic propaganda was used in a number of different ways in different parts of the world. In the New World, “anti-Semitism was confined mostly to forms of speech and social discrimination: literacy stereotypes; pernicious propaganda; explicitly biased advertisements; and beginning around the time of the Civil War, policies discriminating against Jews in hiring and employment.”<sup>61</sup> As anti-Semitic policy practices needed to be constantly implemented for radical organizations to stay in power, the United States furthered their restrictions over time. Propaganda in the United States was centered around newspapers and articles, such as Henry Ford’s *Dearborn Independent* newspaper, which distributed unsolicited anti-Semitic articles to schools, libraries, and universities across the country.<sup>62</sup> This type of propaganda led to the turning away of Jews from schools, clubs, and any other public organizations due to it becoming ingrained into American social life.<sup>63</sup> Restrictions such as these were being implemented internationally, leading to grave limitations on the legal equality and citizenship rights of the Jews worldwide.<sup>64</sup>

In Europe, the Nazi regime’s influence over political structures allowed for the implementation of anti-Jewish decrees to cultivate with “breath-taking speed.”<sup>65</sup> In Hungary,

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<sup>60</sup> Battini, *Socialism of Fools*, i-10.

<sup>61</sup> Woeste, *Henry Ford’s War on Jews and the Legal Battle Against Hate Speech*, 3.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Battini, *Socialism of Fools*, i.

<sup>65</sup> Hanebrink, *In Defense of Christian Hungary*, 199.

these decrees combined stripped the last remaining right of the Jewish population, denying them any kind of public representation and sanctioned the looting of their property. As these decrees were passed, harsher ones began to be implemented to sustain the ever-growing political organizations. This led to the implementation of order number 1240/1994. This forced Jewish persons to wear a yellow Star of David band whenever they were in public spheres.<sup>66</sup> The Nazi regime pushed anti-Semitism onto nations outside the Eurocentric scope as well. During the second World War, the Nazis distributed “millions of printed leaflets and broadcast thousands of hours of shortwave radio programs to diffuse its ideology throughout North Africa and the Middle East.”<sup>67</sup> This use of anti-Semitic propaganda was utilized not only as a tool to extend Nazism’s genocide of the Jews internationally, but to win the war against the Allies as well.<sup>68</sup> By cultivating a sense of anti-Semitism in more areas of the world, the Nazi party hoped to garner further support to win their war for world domination. Anti-Semitism proved to be a viable tool in the organization of radical governing structures throughout post-World War I Europe. The hatred of Jews was a historical animosity felt throughout the international community, so the introduction of anti-Semitism in politics was able to quickly garner the mass support of world populaces. As hate-policies were implemented, they became more normalized to the public, developing more horrific affects with each passing day. As the populace accepted such policies, the desire for the extermination of the Jewish people was able to materialize. Although the genocide stayed within European countries, its affects were felt worldwide. Some of the impacts of the Nazi regime’s politics would turn out to be long-lasting, even going so far as to involve the Jewish people of today.

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*, ix.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

## Effects of Anti-Semitic Practices in Politics

As anti-Semitism had been a deep-rooted animosity amongst the world's masses, radical organizations realized the importance to capitalize on its use as a political tool in garnering support. The ethnic majorities of each nation become normalized to the prejudice against the Jewish people at the hand of the ever-expanding nature of the radical anti-Semitic organizations. Policies are passed that grow exponentially harsher and restrictive against Jews, and as time progresses, the native peoples become more willing to accept them.<sup>69</sup> Anti-Semitic practices thus become a normalized part of governing structures. The need for constant motion within the totalitarian nations leads to the progression of said policies, expanding from simple restrictions and prejudices within ones own country, to spreading throughout the surrounding nations with even harsher policies. This conflict moves from internal to external, resulting in activism for or against civil rights and later, international wars concerning the totalitarian nature of such radical movements and their disposition to the Jewish community. The resulting effects of such policies lead to a common acceptance of hatred, going so far as to evolving to an acceptance of genocide.<sup>70</sup> Anti-Semitic ideologies had first sprang from the Pan Movements of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and as it was cultivated into a political tool, it was used by radical movements to organize of the masses. The aftermath of this ideology eventually led to an overwhelming persecution of the Jewish community, and the eventual acceptance of the removal and extermination of an entire race.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Arendt, 224-43.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Herf, *Divided Memory*, 366.

*Normalization and Acceptance*

During the beginning of the mass movements in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Law of 3 July 1869 was implemented. This law gave legal emancipation to the Jews in hopes of solving the “Jewish Question” of nationality. Contrary to their hopes, this process of emancipation was “long drawn and bitter,” with no satisfactory solution. Anti-Semite’s main claims were to reverse this emancipation, and many governments followed in suit by widely evading “the obligation to treat Jews as equal citizens.”<sup>72</sup> This common hatred was centered around allegations that the masses believed to be true. Bruce Pauley, an anti-Semitism research specialist from the University of Rochester outlines the most relevant allegations as such:

1. Jews everywhere retained their own characteristics, an oriental appearance with a strong bent nose and curly hair;
2. Jews were rich because of their unscrupulous business practices;
3. They had acquired important offices through the “evil” of emancipation and had formed a clique;
4. The “Jewish press” was a morally corrupting influence because of its unscrupulous nature;
5. Jews wanted to establish a world empire;
6. They had different concepts of right and morality than Germans (including Austrians);
7. The errors of the Jewish religion and theology as well as the corrupting teaching of the Talmud were pernicious, for example, in permitting unchastity and prostitution;
8. Jews were cowards;
9. Pogroms were justified because Jews were usurers;
10. Jews were leaders of the Russian Revolution.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Pulzer and Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany & Austria*, xxii.

<sup>73</sup> Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution*, 2.

The allegations against Jews ambled through all common places of everyday life, whether it be religious, economic, social, or racial anti-Semitism. The Jewish community was also being held responsible for any conflicts that arose during this time period as well, such as in the defeat of the Central Powers in the first world war and the “shortages of food, fuel, and housing that accompanied and followed it.”<sup>74</sup> This brought about the usefulness of the idea of using Jews as a scapegoat for any and all conflicts. The Russian Revolution of 1917 was also attributed to the Jews, due to some of the more prominent figures in the revolt being of Jewish heritage. This raised further hostilities between peoples, and a new argument arose that undermined the “civic credibility” of the Jewish peoples. Jews across the globe were then labeled and accepted by the masses as Bolsheviks throughout the next two decades, due to guilt by association.<sup>75</sup>

Jewish peoples were so convenient to place blame on due to their domination in the political sphere, the press, and the field of finance. This control led the masses of gentiles to perceive them in a negative way, directing their hate to parallel the Jew’s economic status. They associated “that they like to rule, influence, [and] exploit, to earn their bread by the sweat of other men’s brows.”<sup>76</sup> The acceptance of such radical ideals as the Nazi’s was rooted in such connections and allegations. Jews had already been excluded from various aspects of life before the radical movements implemented more horrendous policies, which had inadvertently led to their vast wealth and control of the economy. Historically, they had not been allowed to own land or practice a guild craft, so many Jewish peoples were townspeople. They became commercial, or middle-class citizens and travelled from the Mediterranean to places like Germany, Austria, and Poland to make their economies thrive. By being excluded from

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<sup>74</sup> Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution*, 2.

<sup>75</sup> Woeste, *Henry Ford’s War on Jews and the Legal Battle Against Hate Speech*, 76.

<sup>76</sup> Pulzer and Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany & Austria*, 3.

agricultural work, the Jews were able to prosper in other fields. This led to the assumption that Jews avoided manual labor, however research suggests that they avoided it no more than other groups.<sup>77</sup> By pushing on assumptions, allegations, and stereotypes, radical organizations were able to cultivate these feelings of animosity and direct it against the Jewish peoples to effectively organize the masses.

As the majority of the masses jumped on the anti-Semitic bandwagon, more people were persuaded to follow in turn. The idea came about that if everyone believes in anti-Semitism, then they cannot all be wrong.<sup>78</sup> Due to anti-Semitism's ideological premise, it was followed on an instinctual level by the masses rather than on knowledge or historical evidence, eventually boring the characteristics of a religion.<sup>79</sup> The Jewish ideology represented everything that was disliked, feared, and envied. Therefore, *Jewish* became a pejorative term, only being used to “describe negative things, never something cultivated or artistic.”<sup>80</sup> The tradition of Jewish hatred therefore became a necessity for the mass acceptance of radical totalitarian regimes.<sup>81</sup>

### *Jewish vs Totalitarian Activism*

Anti-Semitism became popularized across the globe, however it was not necessarily implemented to the chaotic level that Germany's was. Jewish activism sprouted in response to the anti-Semitic assaults of radical movements.<sup>82</sup> In America, anti-Semitism remained localized

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<sup>77</sup> Pulzer and Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany & Austria*, 3-4.

<sup>78</sup> Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution*, 2.

<sup>79</sup> Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution*, 1.

<sup>80</sup> Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution*, 2.

<sup>81</sup> Pulzer and Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany & Austria*, xxii.

<sup>82</sup> Pulzer and Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany & Austria*, xviii.

with restrictions but no violence.<sup>83</sup> Although there was little conflict within the United States, the American Anti-Defamation League was started as a “desperate effort to stop the slaughter of Europe’s Jews.”<sup>84</sup> Activism of this nature allowed for the problems to become more publicly voiced, however it did little to help the reality of the situation in Europe. Most political circles had already ousted Jews within their organizations, however the Social Democratic Party presented an anti-anti-Semitic stance, as well as allowed Jews to join their ranks.<sup>85</sup> The SDP claimed that anti-Semitism in politics was an “atavistic barbarity,” and by 1914 Jews were primarily voting for this party.<sup>86</sup> Although this seemed like a positive impact against the presence of anti-Semitism, the SDP used their own propaganda that consequently alienated them Jews as well. The humorous papers *Der Wahre Jakob* were published by the SDP. They frequently used stereotypes of Jewish peoples, unknowingly neutralizing any connection the Jews might have felt to them with their stance against anti-Semitic politics.<sup>87</sup>

Aside from their losses in the political sphere, many Jews actually saw no economic benefit in keeping their independence. Many Jews had cultivated skills in tailoring due to their exclusion from other jobs, so “shirt making or umbrella mending in a slum attic 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.”<sup>88</sup> The Jews felt a sense of independence from the community and the nation, consequently dividing them further from the common masses of society. The Jews were able to remain culturally separated from their residing nations with this independence. Although it was inherently supposed to be restrictions in

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<sup>83</sup> Woeste, *Henry Ford’s War on Jews and the Legal Battle Against Hate Speech*, 76.

<sup>84</sup> Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*, 3.

<sup>85</sup> Pulzer and Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany & Austria*, xix.

<sup>86</sup> Pulzer and Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany & Austria*, xxii.

<sup>87</sup> Pulzer and Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany & Austria*, xxiii.

<sup>88</sup> Pulzer and Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany & Austria*, 5.

place to keep the Jewish populations down, it actually presented them the opportunity to remain relevant and even prosperous. As Jewish Activism and presence in politics was diminishing, ignored, or just unwanted, another type of activism was garnering vast support in the world.

The activism that influenced the masses was totalitarian oriented, primarily surrounding the Nazi regime. The political actions of such activists were rooted in a deeper authenticity and passion for the movement. The masses of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries were in a state of woe not just from war, but from the unavailability to start anew. People were encompassed by misery, meekness, frustration, and resentment. The modern culture of the time had been embellished by a falsity of educated talk, and people needed an escape from their social identity.<sup>89</sup> This is where the allure of the terrorist nature of totalitarian regimes took over the morality of the masses. It became a philosophy that people were able to vent their frustrations by directing them solely on the Jewish people. The true power that came from these activist movements was ingrained in their loyal member base. The members involved “were willing to pay the price of life for having succeeded in forging the recognition of one’s existence on the normal strata of society.”<sup>90</sup> Inevitably, the die-hard nature of the totalitarian activists allowed for a far more effective voicing of concerns, ultimately leading to a mass gathering of support to enforce their racist and hostile policies.

## **Aftermath**

The aftermath of anti-Semitism’s use as a political tool in radical organizations of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries brought about different outcomes for Jewish, German, and other

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<sup>89</sup> Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 331.

<sup>90</sup> Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 332.

peoples alike. In postwar Europe as a whole, anti-Semitic ideologies became “a disgraced and dead relic buried in the ruins of the Third Reich.”<sup>91</sup> European nations not involved in the Jewish hatred groups were impacted greatly by the war and genocide, but its effects seem dimmer compared to other places. Nazism had pushed outside the Eurocentric limits that had been customary for previous totalitarian regimes, affecting the West to the Middle East.<sup>92</sup> In areas that are usually ignored by anti-Semitic studies, such as in the Middle East, there were great influences from this type of radicalization in politics. The notions of anti-Semitism have persisted from the Nazi propaganda’s pressure, surfacing in elements of radical nationalist and Islamist politics to this day.<sup>93</sup> In the West, anti-Semitism had never grown violent. The results of the war and genocide in Germany manifested negative attitudes of Americans towards Germans. Americans began to question the loyalty of new immigrants. They began to “regard anyone speaking German with outright suspicion and renew racial standards for awarding citizenship and welcoming recruits into military service.”<sup>94</sup> Coming full circle, anti-Semitism was used as a political tool by German radical groups, who in turn were able to regain pride and power in the world by implementing racist policies, ending with the dissolve of the regime and the devastation of the German people again. To finish this process however, there has been a surge in anti-Semitic conflicts arising again since the 1990s.<sup>95</sup> Only time will tell if the circuit will start again.

The most prominent effects of anti-Semitic politic were felt in Germany, ranging from national public apologies, financial restitution, resurging violent acts, and an everlasting black mark in their history. After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, 1990 saw the unification of East

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<sup>91</sup> Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*, x.

<sup>92</sup> Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*, 1.

<sup>93</sup> Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*, x.

<sup>94</sup> Woeste, *Henry Ford’s War on Jews and the Legal Battle Against Hate Speech*, 76.

<sup>95</sup> Herf, *Divided Memory*, 366.

and West Germany. The fusion of the two sides of Germany raised the possibility of a “new bout of amnesia under conservative auspices,” meaning that the international community feared that the “racist ghosts” of the past could resurface.<sup>96</sup> These fears were not dissipated either, as “neo-Nazi and skinhead violence against foreigners and Jews” emerged again throughout the early 1990s.

The German government officials listed 4,500 acts of violence attributed to right-wing extremist groups directed at immigrants and Jews. These attacks resulted in 26 murders and 1,800 injuries. Several synagogues were the targets of radical right violence.<sup>97</sup>

The East and West sides of the German state had dealt with the end of the Nazi regime quite differently. West Germany had prospered during their time separated due to American influence in their politics and economies. They went so far as to offer financial restitution to the Jewish Holocaust survivors, establish relations with the Israeli state, and make a prominent place in history for the tragedy of the Holocaust. This kept its horrors within public memory and education, so as not to forget or ignore what not only these radical groups had done, but what the whole of Germany had accepted.<sup>98</sup> Conversely, East Germany diminished the significance of anti-Semitism and the Jewish question to chronicles of the Nazi era. They were less than accepting of their loss in the second world war as well, refusing to pay restitution to Jewish survivors or to Israel. They also expelled Communist leaders who tried to give it a more important spot in history. At their worst, they even “gave tangible support to Israel’s armed adversaries.”<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Herf, *Divided Memory*, 3.

<sup>99</sup> Herf, *Divided Memory*, 3.

Rita Sussmuth, the president of Bundestag, delivered one of the first major national political statements about their Nazi past in 1993. She connected the memory of the Nazi regime leading to the Holocaust with the defense of human rights in the present, and called Auschwitz “the cold-blooded, organized, and systematic genocide of the Jews... [the] deepest break in our history.”<sup>100</sup> She had made it known that the Nazi regime permanently changed how the world perceived humanity and how Germans understood their own history.<sup>101</sup> Later still, German Chancellor Kohl explained “the decisive lesson” understood from the experiences of the radicalization of Germans. The lesson being that peace must be based on the “unlimited respect for personal human rights and the rights of [all] peoples.”<sup>102</sup> Germans will feel these difficult memories for generations to come.<sup>103</sup>

## Conclusion

The use of anti-Semitism as a political tool by radical organizations was first cultivated in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>104</sup> These organizations rooted in racism were then pushed by the masses to continuously pass more policies of hatred, consequently allowing for them to wield limitless power. This led these organizations to become more hostile in nature, furthering their anti-Semitic ideals. The passage of increasingly more restrictive and horrendous policies supported by propaganda normalized the public to the prejudice of Jews, therefore the racist policies were more widely accepted.<sup>105</sup> Through this normalization process, the masses of the

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<sup>100</sup> Herf, *Divided Memory*, 366.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Herf, *Divided Memory*, 368.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Arendt, 224-43.

<sup>105</sup> Herf, *Divided Memory*, 3.

world were better rallied and organized behind the activist movement against Jews, thus creating a larger and more loyal supporter base willing to accept any decision without hesitation.

Eventually, this blind following and push for harsher policies against Jews created a common acceptance of the Jewish genocide throughout Germany and other parts of the world as well.<sup>106</sup>

The aftermath of this massacre influenced policy and sense of humanity throughout the international community, with an understanding of the negative effects of anti-Semitism as a political tool.<sup>107</sup> Although these events have been cemented in history, only time will tell if the circle of hatred and violence will start again as a full-fledged radical movement or stay within the confines of small groups internationally condemned.

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<sup>106</sup> Arendt, 313-14.

<sup>107</sup> Herf, *Divided Memory*, 368.

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