German Women and the Triumph of Hitler[1]

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'It was the women's vote', remarked Hermann Rauschning in 1939, 'that brought Hitler to triumph'.[2] Like Rauschning, many commentators have seen a connection between the achievement of the vote for women in 1918 and the victories of the Nazis at the polls in 1932.[3] Yet this connection has also struck observers as paradoxical. The Weimar Republic is popularly regarded as the heyday of the emancipated woman. Many social groups had good reason to be anxious and resentful in Germany between 1918 and 1933, but the female half of the population, newly equipped with the vote and revelling in the new atmosphere of sexual liberation and constitutionally guaranteed equality, was surely not among them. All the more remarkable, then, that it should vote in such numbers for the Republic's demise. The paradox, however, is deeper still than this. For the Nazi party was undoubtedly a dedicated opponent of female emancipation, the ultimate in male chauvinism, firmly committed to a view of women as inferior beings whose main task in life was to bear children and look after the home. Thus the emancipated women of Weimar Germany, it seems, voted quite happily in 1932-3 for their own enslavement. Here, then is a paradox; a paradox, moreover, of very considerable significance, especially in view of the fact that women formed the majority of the German electorate in the years in question.

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research of the most sophisticated and elaborate kind has been carried out on the electoral background to the Nazis' triumph in 1932-33; and the flood of scholarly publications on the social and economic determinants of voting patterns in the final phase of the Weimar Republic is almost overwhelming; but if one common feature is discernible in all this work, it is the almost total neglect of the larger part of the population - the female part. There are many reasons for this; among the most important is the fact that German society has long been more male-dominated than most other industrialised societies;[4] there is still no strong Women's Liberation movement in West Germany of the sort that is proving so influential a stimulus to the rethinking of historians' attitudes to the past in Britain and America. German historians, too, have tended to concentrate on the (male-dominated) organisational articulations of social and economic groups, rather than on the groups themselves, which in many cases (e.g. white-collar workers or munitions workers in World War I) had a large and sometimes preponderant female component. Yet no explanation of any feature of German social history - least of all the rise of Hitler - that leaves out of consideration the larger part of the population can be considered adequate; and there are now, at last, signs that the realisation of this fact is starting to make an impact at least on historians in Britain and the United States,[5] though it has still to find widespread acceptance in Germany.

The discussion of the role of women in German history is only just beginning. This article is an attempt to contribute to this discussion, and to push it forward at a number of points.[6] It does not claim to be comprehensive or authoritative; our general ignorance of many of the questions upon which it touches is as yet too deep for

knowledge of a whole range of subjects; the distribution of authority within the family; the nature, extent, social basis and political role of antifeminism; above all, perhaps, the specific situation and attitudes of specific categories of women, the middle-class housewife, the female shop assistant, the working mother, the secretary, the typist, the telephonist, the female agricultural labourer, the woman textile worker or factory operative, the domestic servant, the waitress, the prostitute. Until we have this knowledge, all that we can do is to discuss some of the general arguments that have so far been advanced, offer some tentative speculations about a few of the more obvious aspects of the problem, and suggest a number of ways in which research might proceed from here.

I

Of the few attempts that have been made to explain why German women voted for Hitler in 1932-33, undoubtedly the most popular, the most widely repeated and (probably) the most generally accepted is that which explains it in terms of their supposedly inherent irrationality. In supporting the antifeminism of the Nazis, it has often been claimed, women were letting their hearts rule their heads in a characteristically female way. The first major commentator to advance this interpretation was the disillusioned Nazi sympathiser Hermann Rauschning. Rauschning's remarks about the emotional effect which Hitler had on women - 'one must have seen from above, from the speaker's rostrum, the rapturously rolling, moist, veiled eyes of the female listeners in order to be in no further doubt as to the character of this enthusiasm'[7] - have been echoed by many commentators. According to Joachim Fest, for example, the 'over-excited, distinctly hysterical tone' of Hitler's meetings 'sprang in the first place from the excessive emotionalism of a

before the ecstatic figure of Hitler'.[8] 'Hitler's monkish persona', Richard Grunberger has written, 'engendered a great deal of sexual hysteria among women . . . not least among spinsters, who transmuted their repressed yearnings into lachrymose adoration'.[9] And William Shirer, attending his first Nuremberg rally as a foreign journalist working in Germany in 1934, 'was a little shocked at the faces, especially those of the women, when Hitler finally appeared on the balcony for a moment . . . If he had remained in sight for more than a few moments', he concluded, 'I think many of the women would have swooned from excitement'.[10]

Nor, according to these writers, was the sexual sublimation which, they argue, provided the driving-force of popular, and above all, of female enthusiasm for Hitler, merely one-sided. For Hitler, too, it is suggested, found an outlet for his frustrated sexuality, a compensation for his lack of a 'normal sexual relationship', in whipping up hysteria among his female listeners. Thus Nazi rallies became a 'collective debauch', resembling 'the public sexual acts of primitive tribes'.[11] Moreover, whatever personal gratifications Hitler may have derived from the way in which, as he is reported to have said, he 'systematically adapted himself to the taste of women',[12] there were also considerable political dividends to be gained. According to his most recent biographer, Hitler exploited and manipulated 'specific female qualities, such as capacity for self-surrender or demand for authority and order'[13] to the advantage of his party as well as himself; and much, though not all, of 'the secret of Hitler's success as an orator lay in this use of speech as a sexual surrogate'.[14]

Hitler himself regarded the root of his success as an orator as lying in the reduction of the whole of his audience, both male and

emotions and abandon any attempt to appeal to their reason. In fact, he thought that the masses were already in a 'feminine' state. 'The people', he wrote in Mein Kampf, 'in their overwhelming majority are so feminine by nature and attitude that sober reasoning determines their thoughts and actions far less than emotion and feeling'.[15] There is, it seems then, if we are to take him at his word, just as much likelihood that the emotional appeal which Hitler is said to have held for women derived more from the general oratorical and propagandistic techniques that he employed than from any attempt to elaborate techniques specifically directed at women. Nevertheless, if Hitler did in fact exert the kind of appeal he is claimed to have exerted, then it would most probably have evoked its strongest response in women.

There is considerable measure of agreement, therefore, on this point at least, between Hitler and his critics. Indeed, it is remarkable that of all the vast mass of verbiage in Mein Kampf, the passages dealing with propaganda and oratory are virtually the only ones which historians have taken at their face value. Why this is so might, it is true, at first sight seem entirely obvious. Hitler, after all, was one of the most successful demagogic orators of all time: therefore what he had to say on the subject of public speaking should surely be worth our attention. Yet this does not mean that we should accept it as an objective statement of truth about the art of winning over the masses, rather than merely an interesting indication of how Hitler thought he was going about his task. After all, Hitler had a great deal to say about a great many things in Mein Kampf, including, for example, the Treaty of Versailles, the destruction of whose provisions was undoubtedly one of his few lasting achievements. Yet, while many might accept this as a statement of Hitler's intentions regarding the Treaty, few would accept it as a statement of objective

still, in some ways, his most stimulating) biographer, Konrad Heiden, considered that Hitler's own description of his relationship with the masses was a distortion, if not a reversal, of the truth.[16]

What later commentators seem in fact to have done, is to have taken Hitler's comments on his mob oratory at their face value, given them a Freudian twist, and presented them as a serious attempt to penetrate the secret of Hitler's appeal. In this respect, as in many others, it is Hermann Rauschning's interpretation which has proved most influential. It had the incidental, and by no means unintentional effect of passing the blame for Hitler's rise to power from the class to which Rauschning himself belonged on to the mass of the people, and more particularly on to the women of Germany, without whose enfranchisement in 1918, Rauschning implied, the Third Reich would never have happened. It was Rauschning who first injected the Freudian element into the theory, already implicit in Mein Kampf, that the relations between Hitler the speaker and those who listened to him could be likened to the relations between a dominant male and his submissive female partner. In recent years, this theme has been taken up and elaborated, though not substantially modified, by Joachim Fest, whose biography of Hitler has received high praise for its 'psychological acumen' even from those reviewers who have strongly criticised its historical judgment.[17]

The trouble is, however, that even in Freudian terms, this general line of interpretation is, to say the least, controversial. Many psychologists see sexual sublimation as a means of harmlessly working off aggressive feelings, rather than - as is implied here - concentrating and heightening them.[18] It is often thought to de-politicise human aggression. Certainly, this would seem to be the

Hitler's propaganda . . . has been grossly exaggerated'.[20] In fact, the range of psychoanalytic hypotheses advanced to explain the triumph of Hitler is so great as to prompt the suspicion that psychoanalytic theories can be used to explain almost anything in almost any way.[21] This is because, as H. J. Eysenck has pointed out, 'the complexities of psychoanalytic reasoning effectively preclude any scientific testing of these theories'.[22] In fact, psychoanalytic and Freudian theories are hardly taken seriously any more by academic psychologists; while in the world of psychiatry, psychotherapy is increasingly being discarded in favour of more effective methods of treatment. Psychoanalysis, indeed, as Erich Fromm pointed out at the end of the 1960's, is in a state of crisis and decline.[23] Yet many, if not most of those historians who pay any attention to the theories of psychology persist in confining their attention to the concepts and methods of psychoanalysis. This may well be because psychoanalysis is vague and protean and lends itself to almost any kind of interpretation. It may also, however, be another example of the way in which historians, when they borrow ideas from the other social sciences, tend to borrow ideas that are out of date.[24]

Freud, of course, has frequently been condemned for the supposedly anti-female content or implications of his theories. Attempts - not always very convincing - have also been made to refute this charge.[25] In fact, it was not Freud who was ultimately responsible for the interpretations we have been discussing, nor was it even the French theorist of crowd psychology, Gustave LeBon, whose ideas Hitler's writings on propaganda closely resembled,[26] for, as the latest commentator on LeBon has pointed out, these theories 'were the <u>lingua franca</u> of nearly all European collective psychologists by 1905'.[27] The

European society before the First World War that to ascribe it to any one theorist would be absurd. The figure of speech by which certain qualities in a crowd, a people or even in the universe could be described as 'feminine' came naturally to a generation which took this stereotype for granted. It still lies at the root of interpretations, such as Joachim Fest's, which ascribe much of Hitler's oratorical success to the way in which he catered for 'specific female qualities' such as 'self-surrender' and a 'demand for authority'.[28] There is nothing specifically female about these qualities, however, nor are they common to all women. In fact, the stereotype of the submissive and emotional woman is best regarded as part of the conservative social ideology of the politically dominant classes in early 20th century Europe; it should be seen as an aspect of political and social conservatism, not as a self-evident fact of life or a conclusively proven theory of modern psychology. In conformity with the conservative ideological background of this stereotype, the writers who have supported the view that Hitler won over the women of Germany to his cause by an appeal that was essentially emotional have either been German conservatives, like Rauschning, or conservative journalists, like Shirer and Fest. The line of interpretation which they favour tends to go hand-in-hand with the view that Hitler's success was based on techniques, that Nazism was devoid of ideological content, that the 'medium' was all, the 'message' nothing. This view still retains its adherents, particularly, as might be expected, among those whose main concern is with Nazi propaganda. Z. A. B. Zeman, for instance, has remarked recently that Nazism 'was not based on a coherent ideology . . . In the last instance National Socialism was a standing invitation to an elect nation to indulge in the pursuit, and the worship, of naked power'.[29] But the view is now rapidly

out their political lifetime. So far, admittedly, this interpretation has concentrated mainly on Hitler's ideas in the sphere of foreign policy. Yet it also has implications - as yet largely unexplored - for the policies of the Nazis in the domestic sphere, particularly in view of the growing consensus among scholars about the centrality of Social Darwinism to the Nazis' way of looking at the world. Historians have recently made some headway in disentangling Hitler's long-term foreign policy goals from his short-term diplomatic opportunism.[30] They have had less success, however, in performing this operation for the domestic sphere. The Thousand-year Reich did not last long enough to allow its rulers to create their version of the perfect society. Rapid rearmament, followed by large-scale foreign conquest, distorted the structure of economy and society and forced the Nazis to sacrifice some of their long-term social policies in the interests of short-term military gain. The problem lies in determining whether military conquest was a means to creating a new social order, or whether the promise of a new social order was a means to mobilising the nation for military conquest.

A way of solving this problem is suggested by a third possible approach, which stresses neither the ideological consistency of the Nazis nor their practical opportunism, but the relationship between the two. The Nazis <u>did</u> have an ideology, but it was an ideology which contained many mutually conflicting aims. These internal contradictions were the most significant constituent of what all commentators have recognised as the Nazi ideology's most important characteristic - its inherent irrationality. As I shall attempt to argue later in this essay, these features of the Nazis' ideology were nowhere more apparent than in their attitudes and policies towards

development and application above all in the domestic sphere urgently require investigation by historians. The real indictment of the 'psychohistorical' approach is that by suggesting that Hitler was a Freudian genius with a unique ability to unleash the hidden forces of the 'German psyche', it denies the importance of this ideology, and divorces the Nazi movement entirely from its economic, social and - above all - its historical context. It fails to explain why some people supported Hitler and others did not.[32] Moreover, it ignores the crucial fact that where people's support for Hitler really counted was at the ballot box, not at rallies and speeches. Comparatively few people attended Hitler's rallies before 1933. Yet observers were more than willing to generalise from people's behaviour at these rallies about the attitudes of the German nation as a whole.[33] This was doubly true of the process by which commentators came to link the enthusiasm shown by women at Hitler rallies to the support given by other women to Hitler at the polls.[34] This method of interpretation really starts at the wrong end: we should really begin not by looking at the small minority of women who enthused for Hitler at Nazi rallies; we should begin instead by looking at the condition, attitudes and aspirations of the much larger number of women who supported him with their votes. Only in this way can we really begin to get an inkling of why they gave their endorsement to the Nazi message.

II

Although some commentators in the 1930's did try to explain women's support for Hitler in terms of rational choice as well as emotional enthusiasm,[35] it is only recently that the attempt has

women in the Weimar Republic were not at all emancipated, as previous commentators have tended to assume. Women in Germany in the 1920's 'lost status and relative independence and, quite probably, a corresponding sense of competence and self-worth'. Industrialisation was transferring women from agricultural and domestic employment to jobs in shops, factories and offices, and it was bringing an increasing number of married women into the labour market. This process, according to Bridenthal, had two contradictory effects. Firstly, the new jobs were more conspicuous than the old, and the increase in the numbers of shopgirls, women factory operatives, secretaries, shorthand typists and clerks gave men the impression that women were becoming economically emancipated. This (it is implied) led to a rise in antifeminism among men, which culminated in the Nazis' call for women to leave the labour market and return to the home. Secondly, however, the new jobs were also less rewarding than the old, not least because they involved a trivialisation of the female image, in the process of which 'German women came to approximate the helpless, clinging and coy sex object projected onto the movie screens and encouraged by the Kitsch of the Weimar period'.

> 'Condemned for her abandonment of the family, suffering consequently from a sense of failure at home as well as at work where her socially induced feeling of inferiority was reinforced by low pay and lack of advancement, it would not be surprising if the woman of the Weimar Republic failed to embrace her supposed emancipation and even actively rejected it in politics.'[36]

This, then, is the reason why German women voted for the Nazis in the elections of 1930-33.

Bridenthal's analysis is undoubtedly stimulating, and it marks a major advance on previous interpretations. Yet it also contains a number of serious weaknesses, and it clearly will not do as it

changing structure of female employment. There is little or no evidence for the far-reaching inferences which are drawn from these tables. Moreover, what they show are developments that had been taking place before the Weimar Republic, and were also taking place in a number of other countries in roughly the same way. Furthermore, it is admitted that the model is intended to explain why women voted for the Catholic Centre Party as well as for the Nazis, since (it is asserted) both parties made a strong call for women to return to the home. It is of little use, therefore, in the light of all these various considerations, in explaining specifically why German women voted for Hitler in 1930-33.

While it is certainly true that the promises of equal rights for women that were enshrined in the Weimar Constitution remained for all practical purposes a dead letter, both in the economic sense and in other spheres, such as the Civil Law, education and the professions,[37] there was nevertheless a sense in which it could be said that some groups of women at least were becoming more emancipated, though this - like all the economic and social trends discussed in Bridenthal's article - was a gradual, long-term development which was taking place irrespective of short-term changes in the political structure. The decline in the birth-rate, the increasing expectancy of life, the decreasing size of the average family - these and other demographic effects of improving standards of living and the spread in the use of contraceptives[38] were all having a profound effect on the life-pattern of the female sex. Among the working classes, the power of the family over its grown-up, unmarried daughters was beginning to decrease. Those women who made up the bulk of the work-force - unmarried women in their teens and twenties - were becoming financially independent.

was not, after all, a state in which they would remain for long, and it was certainly preferable to the authoritarian atmosphere of the family home in which they had grown up. To assert that all German women were trivialised as 'sex objects' is an exaggeration; it may have been true of the unmarried working woman in her twenties, but there is abundant evidence to show that it was certainly not true of the middle-aged Hausfrau and mother. Here the dominant social ideology of the time still painted a sentimentalised image of a noble, virtuous and - despite Freud - an essentially sexless creature, self-lessly and efficiently keeping the German Familienvater's home and family properly in Ordnung. At the same time, however, the same demographic and economic developments that gave greater independence to the younger working girl also gradually enabled the older married woman to engage in paid employment once the children were off her hands; a development that in turn was to undermine the popular stereotype of the German Hausfrau and reveal it to be increasingly restrictive, oppressive and inappropriate to social reality.[39]

In the early stages of industrialisation, it was still accepted in the working classes that the womenfolk had to earn money to help support the family. Working class women engaged in all kinds of jobs; and there is no evidence to show that the changes in the distribution of women in the labour force that undoubtedly occurred over the period covered by the labour censuses of 1895, 1907 and 1925 were from less conspicuous to more conspicuous forms of employment. In Hamburg in the 1890's, for example, according to one observer,

> 'many women streamed into the city centre in the morning and cleaned offices and shops. Others did the same in schools, inns, private homes, hotels and offices. Still others worked as washerwomen . . . Every day one could see long queues of women workers in front of a distillery in the Repsoldstrasse'.

female employment; and domestic servants too could be observed buying food, provisions and household goods for their employers.[40] With the growth of the tertiary sector, new forms of work for women, in department stores and offices, became available. These new forms of employment were surely no more conspicuous than the older ones. But they undoubtedly gave those women who entered them more independence. To take domestic service as an example: under the Gesindeordnung, which laid down the conditions of their employment (before 1918), domestic servants had been little better than serfs. No such conditions attached to employment in other jobs, which was recognised by contemporaries as a major reason for the growing shortage of domestic servants from the turn of the century onwards. Similarly, women shop assistants could enjoy a good deal more freedom working in one of the new department stores than they could working for their father, husband or elder brother in a small family business in the declining retail trades.[41]

The major development revealed by Bridenthal's statistics is the vast expansion of female white-collar employment after the turn of the century. This posed, not a symbolic and general challenge to men's pride, but a direct and concrete threat to their jobs. From the employers' point of view, women typists and secretaries were far preferable to men doing the same jobs; they could be paid lower wages, they were less organised, their rate of job turnover was high, and their career prospects and desire for promotion small. From the point of view of existing male white-collar organisations, the influx of women into employment in the tertiary sector was, correspondingly, a major threat to their jobs and to their bargaining power. It was no coincidence, therefore, that the major white-collar union, the Deutschnationaler Handlungsgehilgenverband (DHV) was rabidly anti-

antifeminist movement before the First World War, and the social group it represented was very probably one of the most receptive to the anti-feminist aspects of the Nazi message.

What the statistics quoted by Bridenthal do not fully reveal is the continuing, perhaps even growing contrast between urban and rural society in the 1920's; emancipatory trends such as the growth of female white-collar employment, the spreading practice and effectiveness of family limitation, and the increasing financial and social independence of unmarried girls in their late teens and twenties from their parents and families, were all concentrated in the big cities, most notoriously of all in Berlin. A rapid social change such as this threatened the male-dominated structure of the family in peasant farming, handicrafts and small-scale family businesses, where the male head of the household relied on the help of the female members of his family to keep the business going. In the case of peasant agriculture, too, the widespread survival and even predominance of old-established social structures, customs and attitudes in peasant areas into the Weimar Republic must have made new social developments in the great cities seem even more strange and reprehensible to the small-scale peasant farmer. Here were further inducements to men in these categories to pay especial attention to the antifeminist propaganda of the Nazis and to give their support - as we know they did - in especially large numbers to Hitler at the ballot box.[42]

The beginnings of long-term trends towards greater freedom and independence for women can help to explain, then, the rise of anti-feminism before the First World War and in the Weimar Republic. And there is little doubt that the antifeminist content of the Nazi message was an important facet of the party's electoral appeal that has suffered from a wholly unjustifiable neglect by historians.

uniform or consistent in its antifeminist attitudes before 1933. The Nazi left, for example, gave considerable support to ideas of female equality and emancipation. Gregor Strasser declared early in 1932 that 'the working woman has equality of status in the National Socialist State, and has the same right to security as the married woman and mother'.[43] And Alfred Rosenberg wrote in his Myth of the Twentieth Century: 'The woman belongs deeply to the total life of the people. All educational opportunities must remain open to her . . . Nor should any difficulties be created for her in the vocational world under present-day social conditions'.[44] 'Of course', said the party in an official statement issued in March 1933, 'we unconditionally recognise women as the completely equal companions of men in political life'.[45] In July 1933, Frau Goebbels, wife of the Propaganda Minister, told an English woman journalist 'that the accounts printed in England about the expulsion of women from their jobs are highly exaggerated. The German woman has been excluded from only three professions: the military (as in the case all over the world), government, and the practice of law'.[46] In 1936 Hitler himself claimed that 'an unlimited range of work opportunities exists for women . . . I am often told: You want to drive women out of the professions. Not at all'.[47]

Of course, all these statements were made for reasons of expediency as well as, or perhaps even rather than, reasons of doctrine or ideology. The party's claim that it regarded women as the equal companions of men in political life was made in response to a questionnaire issued by the Federation of German Women's Associations (Bund Deutscher Frauenvereine or BDF) for the 'orientation' of its members in the Spring elections of 1933, so it is hardly surprising that the party's response was a positive one.[48] Frau Goebbels' statement to the

concerned about the status of women. And the concern voiced by Hitler and Rosenberg about the 'work opportunities' open to women stems from a period, in the late 1930's, when an acute and rapidly worsening labour shortage in the German economy was forcing the authorities of the Third Reich to actively encourage women to enter the labour force, to train as skilled workers, and to take University degrees as a preparation for professional and managerial work.[49]

These tactical and opportunistic statements, however, did conceal a number of deeply-held and permanent beliefs about the position of women in the Third Reich; just as Hitler's opportunism in foreign policy concealed the undeviating nature of his long-term aims.[50] In their social policy, as in their foreign policy, too, the Nazis grappled with problems which the Prussian-German ruling class had been trying to solve in its own interest since well before the turn of the century.[51] In doing so, they took up and attempted to realise ideas and policies which had been developed by right-wing völkisch extremists in the days of Wilhelm II.

III

The policies of Hitler and the Nazis towards women have generally been regarded by historians as particularly conservative and lacking in imagination.[52] The Nazis, it is believed, merely wanted women to return to their 'traditional' role as mothers and housewives. In reality, however, their policies were considerably more radical than this, though to some extent they also overlapped with those of conservative social and political groups. Nazi policies represented a synthesis of selected conservative and radical ideas developed in the Kaiserreich. They were not merely 'traditional': their relation

simple nostalgia for an idealised past. Nazi thought on this topic was governed in the first place by political considerations.[53] The regeneration of Germany was to be achieved by the Männerbund, by the male group united by comradely feelings and trained in the 'virtues' of 'hardness', aggressiveness, and ruthlessness.[54] These qualities Hitler described as 'masculine' in contrast to the 'feminine' qualities he thought were shown in the masses.[55] Ideas such as this went back to thinkers such as Otto Weininger, who erected this masculine/feminine, strong/weak dichotomy into a cosmic principle.[56] The word Feminismus in German referred to these supposed qualities of the female sex. Thus when the extreme right-wing Hammer Bund attacked Imperial Chancellor Bülow for his 'feminism' in 1909, it was not referring to the sympathetic attitude he adopted towards female emancipation,[57] but rather to what it regarded as his policies of compromise and appeasement and his failure to emulate the 'Iron Chancellor' Bismarck.[58] And Antifeminismus, for the völkisch writer Hans Blüher, historian of the youth movement, meant an assertion of the 'masculine' values of 'hardness', comradeship and so on, which, he believed, were only to be found in all-male societies such as the youth movement.[59]

The Nazi political system did not rest on representation, or on constitutionalism, but on 'leadership'. Leadership, it was believed, was an exclusively masculine quality. Women were not admitted to positions of responsibility in the NSDAP before 1933. In the Third Reich, women were excluded from all positions of political power. Moreover, all those organisations and political movements in the Weimar Republic which either claimed that women were capable of leadership or aimed to give even a small number of them a part in the running of the country were singled out by the Nazis for especial condemnation. Most prominent of these objects of Hitler's scorn

the First World War. The origin of these ideas was to be found in the German League for the Prevention of the Emancipation of Women (Deutscher Bund zur Bekämpfung der Frauenemanzipation), a 'national opposition' organisation founded in 1912 by a group of right-wing extremists who included General August Keim, the organiser of the Navy League, and Professor Dietrich Schäfer, a leading pan-German.[60] The 'Anti-League', as it was known, and its ally the German-national Union of Commercial Salaried Employees (Deutschnationaler Handlungsgehilfenverband, DHV), an anti-Semitic white-collar union,[61] believed that the women's movement was part of an international Jewish conspiracy to subvert the German family and thus destroy the German race.[62] The movement, it claimed, was encouraging women to assert their economic independence and to neglect their proper task of producing children.[63] It was spreading the 'feminine' doctrines of pacifism, democracy and 'materialism'. If the movement's demands for female suffrage were granted, the Jewish race would have Germany at its mercy.[64] These ideas were repeated almost without amendment by the Nazis. 'The message of women's emancipation', wrote Hitler in Mein Kampf, 'is a message discovered solely by the Jewish intellect and its content is stamped by the same spirit.'[65] 'The so-called granting of equal rights to women, which Marxism demands', he remarked on another occasion, 'in reality does not grant equal rights but constitutes a deprivation of rights, since it draws the woman into an area in which she will necessarily be inferior. It places the woman in situations that cannot strengthen her position - vis-à-vis both men and society - but only weaken it.'[66] The Nazis regarded the women's movement as an attempt to subvert the qualities of 'leadership' in German men, to convince them that aggression and war

course politics. By introducing a 'feminine' influence into politics, the women's movement was subverting the will and the capability of the German race to survive. It was undermining the 'leadership' on which Germany's future rested. By encouraging contraception and abortion and so lowering the birthrate it was attacking the very existence of the German people. Its claim to represent all German women was an outrage, since in Nazi eyes there was only one organisation that could legitimately do this, and that was the Nazi party itself. Thus the BDF was defamed as a tool of the Jewish world conspiracy to destroy the unity and existence of the German people.

These accusations were wide of the mark. For by the time of the Anti-League's foundation in 1912 - even more by the time of the rise of the Nazi party in the 1920's - the German women's movement had become socially and politically conservative. Largely Progressive (FVp) before 1914, by 1930 the BDF had opened up to the right, and divided its support evenly between the DDP, DVP and DNVP.[67] It opposed contraception, sexual libertarianism and abortion on demand, defended the family as an institution, and held that woman's proper destiny lay in marriage and childbearing.[68] In 1910 it banned from membership the Bund für Mutterschutz, which campaigned for free love, legal abortion and equal rights for unmarried mothers.[69] During the war, it expelled all its pacifist members; it rejected the Treaty of Versailles, and in the early 1920's it refused to co-operate with the International Council of Women.[70] Its programme of 1919, which was binding on the 750,000 or more women who belonged to it,[71] emphasised the differences between the sexes and said that the real task of the women's movement lay in bringing a 'motherly' influence to bear on society. It declared marriage, childbearing and house-

BDF thought that political parties were divisive and supported the idea of an organic national community (Volksgemeinschaft).[73] It claimed to 'unite German women of every party and world view, in order to express their national solidarity and to effect the common idea of the cultural mission of woman'.[74] This was not to be taken literally, of course: the BDF had nothing whatever to do with socialist or communist women; its membership was exclusively middle-class, and it never seriously tried to win over the women of the proletariat.[75] It is hard to escape the suspicion that the BDF shared the general view of the right that the SPD and KPD were not 'German' but 'international'. Moreover, the very use of the words 'German' (deutsch) and 'national' (national) in the BDF programme indicated the movement's nationalistic character and its affinities with the Protestant right.[76]

By 1932, indeed, the BDF was joining in the general attack launched by the right on the parliamentary system and urging the establishment of a fascist-style Corporate State in which one of the 'corporations' would consist of women.[77] When the BDF was about to be dissolved in the Spring of 1933, its President, Agnes von Zahn-Harnack, protested that its aims were thoroughly compatible with those of the National Socialists, and pointed as confirmation of this claim to the movement's support for 'eugenic' policies and the sterilization of 'antisocial elements', its condemnation of the Revolution of 1918 and the Treaty of Versailles, and its denial of the equality of men and women.[78] Gertrud Bäumer, the BDF's most influential figure, believed that the replacement of the movement by a Nazi women's organisation merely signified that the women's movement was 'moving into a new phase'.[79] This was evidence of a considerable overlap between the ideas of the

First World War that only a minority of women had either the ability or the need to enter politics or pursue a career - which it portrayed in terms of 'self-sacrifice' or 'service' analogous to those in which it portrayed the childbearing and housekeeping which were the lot of the majority of women. It was taken for granted that women who pursued a career would remain unmarried. Marriage and childbearing were thought by the women's movement to be incompatible with a career in politics, education or administration. Thus the BDF supported the legal requirement for women schoolteachers to resign when they married, and refrained from opposing a measure introduced in 1930 providing for the dismissal of married women from public service. This measure, it is important to realise, was supported by all political parties in Germany except the KPD.[80] All political parties save the socialists had opposed female suffrage up to the Revolution of November 1918.[81] No-one campaigned with sufficient vigour for a revision of the Civil Code (1900), which gave the German husband and father wide powers over his wife, her property and their children, to secure even a proper debate in the Reichstag, let alone the actual approval of a Bill to this effect.

There was a broad area of agreement between the Nazis and their opponents, including the women's movement, on many other matters concerning the social position of women. All were agreed that policies should be introduced to try and boost Germany's declining birthrate. Here too the Nazis looked to the Kaiserreich for ideas. Since the publication in 1912 of a Prussian government report, drawing attention to the 'dangerous' implications of the decline in the German birthrate which had been going on since the 1870's, had sparked off a national crisis of confidence in the Darwinian capabilities of the German race,[82] there had been an almost uninterrupted debate raging

this debate; the question was merely one of methods. Here also there was a broad area of overlap between the Nazis and their opponents, including the women's movement. The Nazis' insistence on the birth-rate, their 'eugenic' policy of weeding out 'unfit elements' from the reproductive process, their attempts to raise the status of the mother, their belief in encouraging abortion in the case where the foetus or father was thought to be 'racially inferior', their attack on contraception, their enthusiasm for 'racial hygiene' and 'population policy' (Rassenhygiene and Bevölkerungspolitik) - all these were shared by the women's movement and by all parties to the right of the SPD. They had been made familiar to the public at large in countless conferences, debates, articles and books since before the war.[84] Even the attack on syphilis which occupies such a prominent place in Hitler's Mein Kampf that it has led some commentators to think that there were personal reasons behind it, would not have appeared at all remarkable to a readership that had followed the pre-war publicity of the Society for the Suppression of Venereal Diseases,[85] the wartime debate on Population Policy or the political discussions culminating in the Law Against Venereal Diseases passed in 1927.[86]

At the same time, however, there were important points of difference. The Nazis went further than anyone else in their attempts to reduce the status of women in public life; but more important than this, perhaps, was the difference in attitudes towards private life. The women's movement, the BDF, and their critics in the pre-war Anti-League may have been agreed in their belief that it was of vital importance for the nation's future that women be encouraged to marry and have children. The methods used by the Nazis to achieve this aim might not, however, have met with universal approval. They were

measures including medals, tax concessions and other privileges for fecund mothers and large families, and strong efforts to confer equality of status on unmarried mothers, who were officially called 'Frau'. In addition, the 'racially unfit' or 'hereditarily diseased' were to be compulsorily sterilized. Abortion was allowed in such cases. Divorce was made easier for the infertile, just as it had been for similar reasons in the days of Frederick the Great's Prussian Civil Code, replaced in 1900 by laws making it much more difficult to obtain a divorce. Later on in the Third Reich, Himmler founded special maternity homes, the so-called Lebensborn scheme, for unmarried mothers whose children had been conceived by 'racially valuable' men, particularly by members of the SS. Such conceptions were also actively encouraged. In addition, towards the end of the war, Hitler was even thinking of introducing selective polygamy for the purposes of making up the loss of men in the war, 'improving the race' and rewarding the all-male élite of the Thousand-Year-Reich.[87]

These measures were much more radical than those advocated both by the BDF and the political parties (DDP, DVP, DNVP) to which it was closest. These and other socially conservative organisations such as the Anti-League, the Catholic Centre Party or the Evangelical Church, insisted on the sanctity of marriage and the importance of the family as an instrument of securing social stability, and attacked those policies, trends and movements which they believed were undermining these institutions. From their point of view, some of the Nazis' policies - notably the equalisation of the status of the unmarried mother - would have appeared radical or even revolutionary, designed to endanger morality and destroy the integrity of the family. Moreover, while all these groups regarded the family as a vitally

reduced its function in this respect to almost negligible proportions by its insistence on the Männerbund as the primary influence on the character of the male child, and its creation of institutions, such as the Hitler Youth, designed to put this belief into practice. The Nazis' hostility to the 'bourgeois family' was expressed in theoretical works such as Horst Becker's Die Familie, which attacked it because it created and furthered 'private' values and allegiances. Becker looked instead to an idealised peasant family of the past, a 'working community' led by the father and taking a full part (through him) in the working life of the people. The value-orientation of the 'peasant family', it was argued, was public and national, rather than private and personal.[88] It was within this institutional, 'tribal' framework that Hitler most probably thought of introducing practices such as polygamy. Here too his ideas looked back to those of pre-war right-wing extremists such as the militarist Colonel Max Bauer[89] and the völkisch utopian Willibald Hentschel,[90] both of whom attacked the conventional bourgeois marriage and advocated polygamy. But others of the Nazis' policies, notably the equalisation of the status of the unmarried mother and the establishment of eugenic rather than Christian or moral criteria for reaching decisions in matters such as abortion, contraception, motherhood and marriage, can be traced back to groups such as Helene Stöcker's Bund für Mutterschutz which stood to the left of the women's movement and were rejected by it as too radical.[91]

The Nazis' policies, their attack on the family, and their contempt for conventional Christian-based morality had far-reaching and radical implications. Those organisations - such as the BDF - which behaved as the self-appointed guardians of family integrity and moral rectitude, made constant reference in their publications to the 'crisis' of the family in the 'permissive' era of the 1920's. But they appeared to

did exist between the policies of the Nazis towards women and those of the women's movement and of other political parties right of the KPD, the differences were not before 1933 so obvious, and the similarities in many respects were sufficient, as to prevent the public from believing that the NSDAP was offering an essentially different policy to that of the 'Weimar parties' in this respect. When Hitler said that 'equal rights for women means that they experience the esteem that they deserve in the areas for which nature has intended them',[93] he was only repeating what the BDF, the liberal, conservative and Catholic parties and even indeed the Social Democrats, had been saying since before the First World War.[94] What the Nazis were offering was not a clear alternative to the policies of the Weimar parties, but a radicalised version of the same thing.

At the same time, the Nazis' policy towards women also contained a number of deep internal contradictions. I have already discussed at some length the first of these contradictions, between the sentimental idealisation of the family on the one hand, and the ruthless pursuit of eugenic success and the masculinisation of the process of education and socialisation on the other. The more the Nazis stressed the virtues of a stable family life, the more they took away from the family all its most important functions, including even (towards the end of the Third Reich) the production of children. Nor was this simply a case of attempting to cover up the undermining of the family as a public institution by a cynical propaganda campaign designed to persuade people that the party still considered the family to be important. The very real nature of the contradiction between the familial and eugenic aims of the Third Reich was shown by the fact that the Nazi government poured considerable amounts of money into

schemes such as Himmler's Lebensborn project. Similarly, the attempt to equalise the status of unmarried mothers took place at the same time as a massive effort to persuade more women to marry. Even more serious for the Third Reich as a whole were the contradictions implicit in the Nazis' attempt to provide social stability at home as an essential prerequisite of successful war abroad. Fear of 'another' 'stab-in-the-back' prompted from the regime a whole series of practical relief measures and cash allowances to non-working married women designed to reassure the men at the front that their families at home were not suffering in any way because of the war. These measures had the effect of taking women out of the labour market at a time when the labour shortage was already threatening to cripple Germany's war effort almost before it had really begun.[96] The attempts by the Nazis to mobilise women voluntarily by means of a massive propaganda campaign merely served to introduce yet further contradictions into the picture.

It is this inherently contradictory and irrational character of Nazi policies towards women that makes it difficult, if not impossible, to ascribe these policies and ideas to any one single cause. Tim Mason, for example, is undoubtedly right when he points out that the protective attitude of the Nazis towards women, the generous allowances to the wives of soldiers fighting at the front, and the persistent reluctance of the Nazis at all levels to order the full mobilisation of women for the war effort, was due to a large extent to the fear of creating discontent among male heads of households and so possibly arousing their opposition to the regime. Yet it is rather more doubtful whether - as he asserts - the Nazis' policies towards women can be explained by the fact that the more brutally competitive 'public' life, at work and in society and the state, becomes, the more importance

and the unquestionable good for the sake of which the public sphere is endured'.[97] This argument is certainly persuasive for the earlier phase of capitalist development in the 19th century. But it does not tell the whole story as far as the Third Reich is concerned. Apart from anything else, one of the most universal features of the Nazi state was its 'totalitarian' tendency to wipe out the boundaries between public and private life, and to politicise every aspect of the individual's existence.[98] Thus the family, for the Nazis, became as public an institution as the state, and as such tended further to lose its unique significance and become simply one institution among many. It was this attitude which enabled the Nazis to bypass the family to an ever-increasing extent in the pursuit of their eugenic and educational aims. Even women were organised to a greater and greater extent outside the family. The great mass of women were organised in the huge official women's organisation, the Deutsches Frauenwerk, while specific groups were gathered together in specialist societies such as the Bund deutscher Mädel, for young girls, the Mutterschule for pregnant women, and so on.[99] This was in marked contrast to the ideas of conservative antifeminists, who considered that women had no place in organisations of any sort outside the home. The Nazis certainly followed this line as far as abolishing all separate women's organisations with professional, social or political aims concerned with problems which arose outside the home. But they also went further and tried to take away from the female members of the family their previous function of teaching young women the ABC of household management, pregnancy and childbirth. Here was further evidence of the way in which the radicalism of the Nazis' reactionary policies brought their inherent contradictions to the fore.

Nevertheless, there can be little doubt that these policies

and more generally, among those mobilised for war after 1939. They were, after all, designed to a large extent to serve their needs. It is a different and rather more complicated matter, however, when we come to ask to what extent Nazi promises and policies secured the support of German women. In the final section of this essay, I shall make some tentative and rather speculative suggestions as to the extent, the nature and the causes of women's support for Hitler and the Nazis - suggestions which can only be confirmed (or disproved) by further research.

IV

The Nazis, in common with most other political parties in Germany before 1933, regarded women in many ways as a race apart. Women were supposed to have little interest in the world outside the home or problems which immediately concerned them as women. Those few women who did take an active part in politics, in the Reichstag, in provincial diets and in local councils, almost invariably concerned themselves exclusively with 'women's questions', and took no part in the discussion of more general political issues.[100] Similarly, it was assumed, when they voted, what concerned them most were the same narrow issues - above all, perhaps, the problem of food prices in the shops. Yet we should be wary of making a similar assumption ourselves in discussing women's attitudes towards the Nazis. Implicit in the argument that women voted for Hitler because he promised to lead them back to the security of the nursery and the kitchen sink is the assumption that women did not take any other issues into consideration when they voted. Men might vote on the great issues of the day - foreign policy, economic revival, constitutional change, social stabilisation - but women (it

it. Instead, they voted purely on the kind of future which the various parties offered them as women.

There is, as we shall see, some truth in this assumption, though less in relation to voting patterns than to other forms of political expression. But it is by no means the whole truth. And for the period before 1933 it does not fit at all. In the elections of 1930-33, the female vote behaved, in general, in roughly the same way as the male vote. The DVP, DNVP, DDP (Staatspartei) and splinter groups lost almost all their female support, just as they lost almost all their male support. The female support of the Centre held more or less firm, as did the party's male support; the SPD lost a little, the KPD gained quite considerably, the respective decline and increase being (proportionately) roughly the same in both sexes; and the Nazi party increased by leaps and bounds up to the first Reichstag election of 1932, drawing its new voters in approximately equal proportions from both sexes.[101] The obvious inference to make, therefore, is that the same factors were responsible for the change in voting patterns in both sexes. It is necessary, however, to qualify this inference in a number of respects. First, a great many of those women who voted Nazi in 1932-33 very probably did so because the male head of their household voted Nazi. This was particularly likely in the urban and rural petty-bourgeoisie, where support for the Nazis was strongest, where female members of the family were least likely to have gained economic independence from the male head of the household, and were most likely still to be 'family assistants' (mithelfende Familienangehörigen), accustomed to obeying the dictates of the Familienvater in the family workshop, farm or retailing business.[102] The characteristic belief of the Nazis that women knew nothing of politics further indicated that when it came to voting, Nazi supporters

evidence as we possess tends to confirm this hypothesis. Attending a Hitler meeting in October 1932, one observer, an active member of the BDF, noted:

> 'I was surprised to discover a large number of women, a discouraging sight. At meetings of the German Women's Movement we had never managed to secure audiences of this number or - still more important - of this sort. These here were the "kleinbürgerliche Hausfrauen" - the housewives of the lower middle class - predominating among others of all classes.'[103]

Yet this quotation also indicates that a large number of women were also finding reasons of their own to vote Nazi in the last years of the Weimar Republic. It is unlikely that every woman who attended a Hitler meeting did so merely as the companion of her husband or father. The second qualification that we must make to the hypothesis that women tended to vote in the same way as men is that although the same social groups of women voted Nazi as the social groups of men who supported Hitler, to some extent they did so for different reasons. The Depression hit the men and women of the same social groups in rather different ways. This was particularly true of men and women in employment. In 1932, the BDF not only lost almost half its members with the defection en masse of the middle-class Housewives' Associations (Hausfrauenvereine), it also had to suffer the loss of its youth organisation to the Nazi Bund deutscher Mädel.[104] Young women were by far the largest category of women in employment; and they were hit far more severely than men by the crisis of 1929-33. The Depression forced massive numbers of older women as well as younger female workers out of work. The least productive, the oldest and youngest, were heaviest hit.[105] And of these groups, the larger and younger also belonged simultaneously to two of the major categories of the electoral supporters of the Nazis - the young and the previous

proportion to the Nazi banner, all the more so as the major political outlet for the unemployed, the KPD, was peculiarly unattractive to women, for reasons I shall discuss later in this essay. Support for the Nazis was probably overwhelmingly strong amongst the younger female white-collar workers. If any category of women reached the decision to vote for Hitler independently of any persuasion from their male relatives, it was this group. In this limited sense, therefore, Bridenthal's argument is correct; economic developments were posing a direct threat to the status and well-being of many younger women, and the consequence was that they turned against the Weimar Republic which had failed to provide them with a secure or worthwhile life, and accepted the Nazi promise of a stable and well-rewarded life at home. But it was the short-term impact of the Depression rather than the long-term trend of 'modernisation' that lay behind this development, and it affected only a relatively small number of women, not the entire female sex of Germany. Other factors, as we have seen, must be adduced to explain the voting behaviour of the majority of female electors.

Among other social groups, electoral support for the Nazis was less certain. Professionals, for example, took their voting responsibilities more seriously than other women.[106] And they also dominated the leadership of the BDF. They certainly failed to recognise the real impact of the Nazis' policies. Professional organisations such as the Women Teachers' Union gave in to the Nazis in 1933 not only without any struggle, but even with a certain amount of enthusiasm.[107] Yet some professional women at least were concerned by the antifeminist implications of Nazi ideology. Women University students are a case in point. Women were first admitted to Universities as full-time students in the years 1902 to 1908. From

shown, they were subject to many forms of economic and social discrimination under the Weimar Republic, and their situation, if anything, got worse as the years went by. But economic penury, social discrimination and the increasing lack of job prospects did not automatically lead to a growth in female support for the Nazi students' organisation, the Nationalsozialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund (NSDStB). In its early years, it is true, the NSDStB did gain considerable support from women students. But this was in large measure due to the fact that it was controlled by the Nazi 'left', which allowed, at times indeed even encouraged, women students to take an active part in politics, to offer themselves as candidates on the NSDStB list in student elections, and to act as fully equal partners of their male colleagues in the NSDStB. By the Winter Semester of 1929/30, this line was paying considerable dividends: in Breslau University, for example, 58% of women students but only 20% of men students voted NSDStB. This phase ended, however, with the takeover of the NSDStB by Baldur von Schirach, the implementation in July 1930 in the NSDStB of the general Nazi party rule that women were not to offer themselves as candidates for the party in elections, and the creation in August 1930 of a separate and strictly subordinate party organisation for women students, the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Nationalsozialistischer Studentinnen. The result was that the Nazis lost almost all the support they had gained among women students in the late 1920's.[108] Resistance to Nazism was not strong among professional groups. But neither, it seems, was enthusiasm for the Hitler movement. This is particularly likely to have been the case in the early years of the Third Reich, when professional women were hit by a number of Nazi policies designed to reduce their status, block off their avenues of promotion, and - above all - decrease their

liberal and right-wing parties for the Nazis in the final phase of the Weimar Republic. But neither in absolute numbers nor in percentage terms is it likely that their support for Hitler was as strong as that of women lower down the social scale in white-collar employment and petty-bourgeois jobs.

A further qualification that has to be made to the general thesis that women tended to vote the same way as men in the years 1930-33 is in many ways the most important. German women constituted well over half the electorate in the last years of the Weimar Republic; but, as we know, well under half of the electorate - to be exact, no more than 37.3% - ever found their way to supporting Hitler at the polls.[110] Of these 37.3%, it is extremely unlikely that more than half were women. At various times, and in various places, the Weimar Republic conducted, largely for reasons of statistical curiosity, separate polls for men and women at the elections. Twenty years ago the results of these separate polls were subjected to an exhaustive analysis by Gabrielle Bremme. She found that women were relatively less inclined to vote than men. At times of high political tension, however, - notably in 1919 and 1930-33 - the proportion of women casting their votes became as great as, even, on occasion, greater than, the proportion of men voting. In the Weimar Republic, the proportion of women voting in elections increased with the size of the town in which they lived. Participation was highest in the great cities, and lowest in small towns and country districts. Married women voted in higher proportion than unmarried, and much higher than divorced, women. Single professional women, however, voted in particularly high proportion. The younger women were, the more likely they were to vote. In the Weimar Republic, however, voting participation of all female age-groups was less than the male

Some of these factors are likely to have cancelled each other out in the period 1930-33. But their overall tendency suggests that the female contribution to Hitler's electoral successes was, at the most, limited. Hitler's main electoral support in these years came from small towns and country districts, the younger age groups, previous non-voters, and the former supporters of middle-class liberal and conservative parties such as the DDP, DNVP, DVP, and some of the splinter parties. Balancing all these various factors out seems to indicate that Hitler and the Nazis exerted no particular attraction for women at the polls. Unfortunately, most of the separate counting of male and female votes was conducted in the years before 1930. But such evidence as we have for 1930-33 does confirm this conclusion. In the Presidential election of 13 March 1932, for example, Hindenburg had many more women supporters than Hitler, both absolutely and relatively. In the sample of polling stations in which separate voting by sex was carried out, 51.6% of the female votes, and 44.2% of the male votes went to Hindenburg, while 26.5% of the female votes and 28.3% of the male votes went to Hitler. Had it been left to the women to decide, therefore, Hitler would have been defeated on the first ballot. In the second round of the election, held on 10 April 1932, with the weakest candidates eliminated, Hindenburg secured 56% of the female votes in the sample, and 48.7% of the male, while Hitler gained 33.6% of the female votes and 35.9% of the male. The third candidate in this election, the KPD leader Ernst Thälmann, it is interesting to note, won 15.4% of the male votes in the sample, but only 10.4% of the female votes.[112] Such other statistics of voting by sex as are available confirm the trend suggested by these two elections. In Köln, where we do have figures for the crucial period 1928-33, 1.4% of the female votes cast and 2.2% of the male fell to

of 1932 - the height of the Nazis' success - they were 22.8% and 26.4%.[113]

The most significant difference in voting behaviour between men and women, however, lay in the women's greater preference for religious-oriented parties. It is this, for example, that gave Hindenburg, who enjoyed the support of the Catholic Centre and the strongly Protestant DNVP, such a strong advantage over Hitler in the Presidential elections of 1932. Gabrielle Bremme's study demonstrated convincingly that women were far more inclined than men to vote for religious parties. In particular, female support for the Catholic Centre and the DNVP was proportionately much higher than male support. In addition to this, the excess of females over males in the population was particularly high in the older age-groups, where their support for religious parties remained strongest and most consistent. The Catholic Centre enjoyed a further advantage in the marked tendency of Catholic women to vote more frequently and in greater proportion than Protestant women. In the first Reichstag of 1932 in Köln, while 21.2% of the male votes cast went to the Catholic Centre, no less than 34.6% of the female votes cast were cast in its favour. Conversely, the relative lack of enthusiasm on the part of women for the Nazis and - above all - for the KPD, can be most plausibly attributed to the non-religious or even anti-religious reputations of these particular organisations.[114] The religious faith of Catholic women in particular - nurtured by their education and upbringing and reinforced by the emotional stereotypes to which the dominant social ideology of the time expected them to conform - was a major source of resistance to the Nazi appeal. Without it, the Catholic Centre party would have lost far more support than it did to the Nazis in the elections of 1930-33. Indeed, the strength of the Catholic Centre's resistance to Nazism

socialist and working-class areas and in professional and upper-class groups, women offered almost no resistance to the Third Reich; the Rote Kapelle, as Tim Mason has remarked,[115] proved an exception to the rule in this as in other respects. The conservative opposition to Hitler was almost as antifeminist as Hitler himself;[116] while the socialist movement had in practice consistently discouraged the active participation of women in the conduct of political affairs.[117] Female resistance to Nazism was nevertheless generally more outspoken, more violent and more widespread than male resistance. Already in the early years of the Third Reich, there was strong and persistent resistance among religiously oriented women to the attempts of the Nazis to enrol them in the Deutsches Frauenwerk. Encouraged by the Churches, Catholic and Protestant women not only objected but even staged public demonstrations on this issue.[118] It was for this reason that the regime proceeded with especial caution against religious-based women's organisations, and made no move to dissolve them until it felt firmly established in power. Most confessional women's associations were kept in being until 1935; the Union of Catholic Women Schoolteachers, indeed, was not dissolved until October 1937.[119] Nevertheless, resistance continued; and the Nazis seem to have made little headway among religious women even at the height of the regime's popularity. Much has been written about the resistance of the Churches, and particularly the Catholic Church, to the Third Reich. It has seldom been pointed out, however, that this resistance would have collapsed overnight but for its solid bedrock of support among the mass of Catholic women.

It was during the war, however, that women's resistance to Nazi rule became most comprehensive and unrestrained. Among the middle

the duration of the war', opting out of national life altogether. In the factories, women, especially married women, whose separation allowance for their husbands at the front was much smaller than that of non-working housewives, tended increasingly to work badly, to break the rules, to absent themselves from work, and to be generally recognised as less reliable and more undisciplined than men. Yet while the authorities meted out harsh punishments to male factory workers who broke the rules, their female counterparts got off lightly.[120] This may have been a facet of the Nazis' 'protective' attitude towards women, a feature of their deeply ingrained belief that women were inherently more emotional and less stable than men. Yet it may also have reflected the Nazis' knowledge that women could be much more easily provoked into open resistance than men, and their fear that such resistance might have become very difficult to suppress without alienating not only the general populace but also the soldiers at the front.

The Nazi authorities kept a particularly close watch on the morale of women during the war; and they paid close attention to the maintenance of food supplies, whose inadequate provision during the First World War had led to violent disturbances, invariably led and carried out by women, as early as the Spring of 1916.[121] Nevertheless, similar outbreaks also took place during the Second World War. On 11 October 1943, for example, a series of riots took place in Hamm, Lünen, Bochum and Witten in the Ruhr, in which the wives of miners were said to have played a particularly prominent part. In Witten, some 300 women were reported to have staged a demonstration violent enough to oblige the authorities to command the police to disperse them. Even more remarkably, the police refused to carry out their orders, declaring that the women's cause was a just one. What that cause in fact was,

characterised the Nazis' policies towards women, work and the family.

The occasion for the demonstrations of 11 October 1943 was the refusal of the authorities to distribute food rationing cards to the women concerned. The reason for the refusal was the fact that these women had returned without authorisation from the areas to which they have been evacuated after the beginning of large-scale Allied bombing raids. The withholding of food rationing cards was intended to coerce them into obeying the evacuation instructions and returning whence they had come. These instructions were in turn declared to be illegal by the police. And, indeed, other areas such as Essen and Köln had not carried out compulsory evacuation, and were thus free from disturbances at this time. The evacuation instructions were resisted - reported the authorities - because the working-class women concerned resented being separated from husband and home and being transported to rural areas where their presence was in turn not welcome. Women evacuees were said to be beset by fears that their husbands were not being looked after properly; that their children's health, education and - above all - religious upbringing was suffering; that the whole purpose of the evacuation, indeed, was to be the better able to influence the children against religion and the Catholic Church.[122] All this was, of course, a facet of the continued resistance of Catholic women to the Third Reich. Yet it also demonstrated once more that many of the Nazis' policies had the effect of undermining or breaking up the family unit which Nazi ideology declared the aim of the Third Reich to preserve.

Resistance to compulsory evacuation may well have been more widespread than these reports suggest. It was inspired not so much by the success of Nazi propaganda in emphasising the need for family loyalty and cohesiveness, as by the threat posed by Nazi policies to

had been educated by Catholicism long before the Third Reich came into being. The 'three k's' of the famous cliché about the German woman's lot in life - Kinder, Küche, Kirche - were indeed an indissoluble Trinity; and from 1943 onwards, German - and above all, Catholic German - women felt that all of the roles concerned were coming increasingly under threat. The Nazis had of course never offered women more than the first two k's;[123] the last thing they wanted was to encourage women to go to Church. Now, evacuation measures whose ultimate origin lay in the Nazi drive towards World War, were taking women away from their own kitchens, and endangering in all sorts of ways, both real and imagined, the well-being of their children. Women responded by evading or disobeying the measures, and, on occasion, by staging public demonstrations - a rare and almost unprecedented event in the Third Reich.

The various forms of resistance offered by women - including those of disobeying rules at work and absenteeism - were political only in the most limited sense of the word. Since long before the Third Reich, women had been given an education and an upbringing grossly inferior to that of men, stressing their role in the home, emphasising the emotions and neglecting the intellect, turning them away from political activism and denying them any training in political understanding.[124] Like the peasants of the pre-industrial era, they were educated to subservience and obedience, and told to believe that religion was the only form of mental activity they need trouble themselves with; politics was the business of their betters. And, like the pre-industrial peasants, when they did take political action, it was usually spontaneous, short-term, concrete in aim and wholly unrestrained, with little thought of the possible repressive consequences. Rumour played a major role in determining their

been chiefly spread by women; men preferred to crack dry political jokes of the kind familiar under dictatorships.[125] Women, too, were reported to take little or no interest in the progress of the war, to be avoiding reading the political section of the newspapers, and to be displaying a far more open and general war-weariness than men.[126] And when it came to placing the blame on somebody for their troubles, here too the women's attitudes recalled those of the mediaeval peasantry:

> 'It is noticeable', observed a security service report, 'that many of the policies of the Party and its leading personalities are criticised by women to a greater degree than by men. But most women always place their trust in the person of the Führer. In general, women always take the view that if only the Führer knew everything that was going on, he would certainly come to their aid.'[127]

This attitude reflects, not any peculiar emotional bond between German women and the personality of the Führer,[128] but the general structure of the political mentality of the politically illiterate.[129]

The persistence of this mentality, with its relative imperviousness to the appeal of Hitler, in a very large number, if not the majority, of German women, above all in Catholic areas, urban as well as rural, throughout the Third Reich, provides of course yet another indication of the failure of Nazism to penetrate and to remould the mental, as well as the social and economic, structures of the German people in any but the most superficial way.[130] As far as women were concerned, there is some evidence that the Third Reich succeeded in slowing down the process of transition to a demographic regime of low birth rates and small families which has formed the main trend in the development of Germany's population structure from the turn of the century to the present day.[131] But this retardative effect was no more than very short-term. In the long run, the Third Reich appears as no more than a stage in the secular process of the creation of modern demographic and economic structures in German society. Its attempts to slow down

powerful pre-industrial elements in German society, both in rural and urban areas, both in feudal and capitalist sectors.[132] The Nazis' appeal only became successful when it was directed towards these elements.[133] Yet there were alternatives offered, alternatives which went some way towards cushioning the effects of industrialisation and social change on those sectors of society most vulnerable to them. For women, this role was fulfilled above all by the traditionalism of the Catholic Church. To a lesser extent, too, a similar role was played by Evangelical Protestantism. Women who were not protected in this way tended to turn towards National Socialism in the social and political extremities of the last years of the Weimar Republic, especially in the great cities and conurbations, where religion was notoriously weak. They continued to respond to the regime in the 1930's. But where the Third Reich failed to continue the exercise of this protective role - as in the case of married women factory workers - or where the radicalism of its methods led to an obvious retreat from it, resistance, both passive and active, was likely to be aroused.[134] Hitler and the Nazis were never able to win the whole-hearted support of the majority of German women. By the end of the war they had lost even that little they had once been able to gain.[135]

[1] This article began as an attempt to develop some of the points touched upon but, largely for reasons of space, discussed only very briefly, in the final chapter of my book The Feminist Movement in Germany 1894-1933 (SAGE Studies in 20th Century History, ed. W. Laqueur and G. L. Mosse, Vol. 6, London, 1976). An early draft was accepted for publication by the Journal of Modern History in May 1975, and the article was revised in July-October 1975. During the course of revision, it grew both in scope and in size far beyond my original intentions. That it did so is due not least to the helpful comments of the JMH reader; but above all I am indebted to Dr T. W. Mason, both for his careful reading of the paper, and for allowing me to see the typescript of his stimulating article 'Women in Germany 1925-40: Family, Welfare and Work', to be published in History Workshop Journal, Vol. I, March 1976.

[2] Hermann Rauschning, Hitler Speaks. A Series of Political Conversations with Adolf Hitler on his Real Aims (London, 1939), p. 259.

[3] For a recent example, see Ralf Dahrendorf, Society and Democracy in Germany (London, 1968), p. 116.

[4] Cf. Ch. 1 of The Feminist Movement in Germany (op.cit.), for discussion of this point.

[5] See above all Mason, art.cit., and Jill Stephenson, Women in Nazi Society (London, 1975/6). (I have only been able to see the typescript version: 'Women in German Society 1930-1940' (Edinburgh Ph.D., 1974). Citations below are to this version of the book.) Research in progress includes Renate Bridenthal (Brooklyn) on Women in the German Labour Force during the Weimar Republic, Helen Boak (Manchester) on Women in Baden 1919-33, Barbara Greven (Erlangen) on the women's movement 1919-33, and my own work on Women in German Society 1890-1945. See also the concluding comments of Mason, art.cit., on the importance of women's history for the study of Nazism.

[6] For a more general survey of recent work, source material and possible lines of interpretation and research, see Richard J. Evans, 'Feminism and Female Emancipation in Germany, 1890-1945: Sources, Methods and Problems of Research', Central European History (forthcoming).

[7] Rauschning, op.cit., p. 259.

[8] Joachim C. Fest, The Face of the Third Reich (Harmondsworth, 1972), p. 401.

[9] Richard Grunberger, A Social History of the Third Reich (Harmondsworth, 1974), p. 117.

[12] Albert Zoller, Hitler privat (Düsseldorf, 1949), quoted in Fest, loc.cit.

[13] Fest, op.cit., p. 402.

[14] Joachim C. Fest, Hitler (London, 1974), pp. 323-4.

[15] Adolf Hitler, Mein Kampf (transl. Ralph Manheim, ed. D. C. Watt, London, 1969), p. 167.

[16] Konrad Heiden, Adolf Hitler. Eine Biographie. Vol. I, Das Zeitalter der Verantwortungslosigkeit (Zürich, 1936), pp. 324 ff.

[17] Hermann Graml, 'Zur neuen Hitler - Biographie von Joachim C. Fest', Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte, 1974, No. 1.

[18] Cf. Anthony Storr, Human Aggression (Harmondsworth, 1970), pp. 114-123: 'Schizoid Defences against Hostility'.

[19] For a brilliant elaboration of this hypothesis, see George Melly, Revolt into Style: the Pop Arts in Britain (Harmondsworth, 1972).

[20] J. A. C. Brown, Techniques of Persuasion. From Propaganda to Brainwashing (Harmondsworth, 1963), p. 111, note. Dr Brown's analysis leans heavily on Rauschning's work.

[21] There are of course many other psychoanalytic accounts of Hitler and Nazism than the one outlined above. Perhaps the best-known are Walter C. Langer's recently published wartime study The Mind of Adolf Hitler, and Wilhelm Reich's The Mass Psychology of Fascism.

[22] H. J. Eysenck, Fact and Fiction in Psychology (Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 106. See also in general Chapter 3 of Eysenck's book, with references.

[23] Erich Fromm, The Crisis of Psychoanalysis (Harmondsworth, 1973).

[24] From some criticisms of historians' use of psychoanalytical concepts, and some instructive examples of the very real contribution that psychology can make to historical study, see Ida Macalpine and Richard Hunter, 'The Pathography of the Past', Times Literary Supplement, 15 March 1974, pp. 256-7.

[25] Cf. Juliet Mitchell, Psychoanalysis and Feminism (Harmondsworth, 1975).

[26] Alfred Stein, 'Adolf Hitler and Gustave le Bon', Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht, 6 (1955), pp. 362-8. The point that Hitler's ideas on propaganda were no more original than the other ideas outlined in Mein Kampf still stands, however.

[28] Fest, Face of the Third Reich (op.cit.), pp. 323-4.

[29] Hermann Rauschning, Die Revolution des Nihilismus (1938), discussed, along with other versions of the same view, in Eberhard Jäckel, Hitler's Weltanschauung. A Blueprint for Power (Middletown, Conn., 1972), pp. 13-17, forms the source of this interpretation. The quote is taken from Z. A. B. Zeman, Nazi Propaganda (2nd ed., Oxford, 1973), p. xii.

[30] Cf. Klaus Hildebrand, The Foreign Policy of the Third Reich (London, 1973).

[31] For the application of this approach to Nazi foreign policy, see T. W. Mason, 'Zur Funktion des Angriffskriegs 1939', in G. Ziebura (ed.), Grundfragen deutscher Aussenpolitik seit 1871 (Darmstadt, 1975).

[32] The tendency of 'psychohistorians' to indulge in sweeping generalizations about 'the German people' is well exemplified in Rudolph Binion, 'Hitler's Concept of Lebensraum: The Psychological Basis', History of Childhood Quarterly, 1/2, Fall 1973, pp. 187-258, with comments by a number of historians specialising in the Third Reich. These comments are, however, generally neutral or mildly positive, and gloss over the real weaknesses of 'psychohistory'. For more cogent and effective criticisms by historians, see Geoffrey Barraclough, 'Psycho-History is Bunk', The Guardian, 3 March 1973; H. R. Trevor-Roper in Die Zeit, 13 April 1973; and Hans W. Gatzke, 'Hitler and Psychohistory', American Historial Review, 78/2, April 1973, pp. 394-401, and again in American Historical Review, 78/4, Oct. 1973. For criticisms by a psychiatrist, see Robert Coles, 'Shrinking History', New York Review of Books, 22 Feb. and 8 March 1973.

[33] E.g. the account of the 1934 Nuremberg Rally in William L. Shirer, Berlin Diary (op.cit.).

[34] Thus the chapter on women in Rauschning, Hitler Speaks (op.cit.).

[35] Notably Clifford Kirkpatrick, Nazi Germany: Its Women and Family Life (New York, 1938), pp. 45 ff., and Katherine Thomas, Women in Nazi Germany (London, 1943), pp. 23, 26.

[36] Renate Bridenthal, 'Beyond Kinder, Küche, Kirche: Weimar Women at Work', Central European History, June 1973, pp. 148-166.

[37] The Civil Law, with clauses giving the German husband ownership of his wife's property, control over the children, and so on, remained in force in West Germany at least until the passage of the Gleichberechtigungsgesetz in 1956. For education, the professions and the economy, see Bridenthal, art.cit.; J. R. McIntyre, 'Women and the Professions in Germany 1930-1940', in Anthony Nicholls and Erich Matthias (eds.), German Democracy and the Triumph of Hitler

1973), pp. 75-147; Jürgen Kuczynski, Die Geschichte der Lage der Arbeiter unter dem Kapitalismus, Bd. 18: Studien zur Geschichte der Lage der Arbeiterin in Deutschland von 1700 bis zur Gegenwart (East Berlin, 1963), pp. 201-268; and Michael H. Kater, 'Krisis des Frauenstudiums in der Weimarer Republik', Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte 59/2/2 (1972), pp. 207-255.

[38] Ulrich Linse, 'Arbeiterschaft und Geburtenentwicklung im Deutschen Kaiserreich von 1871', Archiv für Sozialgeschichte, XII (1972), pp. 205-271; John E. Knodel, The Decline of Fertility in Germany 1871-1939 (Princeton, 1974). Discussion (with statistics) in Mason, 'Women in Germany', art.cit., making a similar point.

[39] For general surveys of these problems (though not specifically relating to Germany), see Louise A. Tilly and Joan W. Scott, 'Women's Work and the Family in Nineteenth Century Europe', Comparative Studies in Society and History, Jan. 1975, pp. 36-64; and Eric Richards, 'Women in the British Economy Since About 1700: An Interpretation', History, 59/197, Oct. 1974, pp. 337-357. For the idealisation of the German Hausfrau and mother in the 1920's, cf. periodicals such as Die Frau, relevant passages of the Reichstag debates, etc.

[40] Johannes Schult, Geschichte der Hamburger Arbeiter 1890-1919 (Hamburg, 1967), pp. 30-35.

[41] Statistical and qualitative evidence for domestic service in Kuczynski, op.cit. For the retail trades, see Robert Gellately, The Politics of Economic Despair: Shopkeepers and German Politics 1890-1914 (SAGE Studies in 20th Century History, Vol. 1, 1974) - typically, however, there is almost no mention of the role played by women in the retail trades.

[42] This is one of the most useful points made by Mason, 'Women in Germany', art.cit.

[43] Quoted in David Schoenbaum, Hitler's Social Revolution (London, 1967), pp. 188-9. See Kater, art.cit., for details of the Nazi left's politics towards women.

[44] 1938 edition, quoted in George L. Mosse, Nazi Culture: Intellectual, Cultural and Social Life in the Third Reich (New York, 1966), p. 40.

[45] Deutsches Zentralarchiv für Soziale Fragen, Berlin-Dahlem; Archiv des Bundes Deutscher Frauenvereine 1/A/2: Mitteilung an die dem Bund Deutscher Frauenvereine angeschlossenen Verbände, 29 March 1933, Anlage 1.

[46] Quoted in Mosse, op.cit., p. 42.

[47] Quoted in ibid., p. 39.

[48] Cf. note 45 above.

of Contemporary History, January 1975.

[50] Hildebrand, op.cit.

[51] See ibid., Ch. 1.

[52] Grunberger, op.cit., p. 322, for just one example of this view.

[53] Cf. T. W. Mason, 'The Primacy of Politics - Politics and Economics in Nazi Germany', in S. J. Woolf (ed.), The Nature of Fascism (London, 1968).

[54] Ingeborg Weber-Kellermann, Die deutsche Familie. Versuch einer Sozialgeschichte (Frankfurt am Main, 1974), pp. 178-185.

[55] Adolf Hitler, Mein Kampf (op.cit.), p. 167.

[56] G. L. Mosse, The Crisis of German Ideology. Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich (London, 1966), p. 215.

[57] Staatsarchiv Hamburg, Politische Polzei, S9001/I: cutting of Die Post, 20 March 1902, for Bülow's claim that he supported the emancipation of women.

[58] Hammer, No. 158, 15 Jan. 1909.

[59] Hans Blüher, Der bürgerliche und der geistige Antifeminismus (3rd ed., 1920). For Blüher, see G. L. Mosse, The Crisis of German Ideology. Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich (London, 1966), pp. 172-8.

[60] Kater, art.cit., pp. 247-8, suggests that Hitler's antifeminism (in the sense of opposition to female engagement in politics) derived from Lanz von Liebenfels (cf. Wilfried Daim, Der Mann, der Hitler die Ideen gab, Munich, 1958). This, however, is rather doubtful. For a critical perspective on the influence of Lanz, see Jäckel, op.cit. For the 'national opposition', see Dirk Stegmann, Die Erben Bismarcks. Parteien und Verbände in der Spätphase des wilhelminischen Deutschlands (Köln/Berlin, 1970). For the connections between the 'national opposition' and the emergent Nazi movement, see Dirk Stegmann, 'Zwischen Repression und Manipulation: Konservative Machteliten und Arbeiter- und Angestelltenbewegung 1910-1918. Ein Beitrag zur Vorgeschichte der DAP/NSDAP', Archiv für Sozialgeschichte, XII (1972), pp. 351-432. For a fully documented analysis of the 'Anti-League', see Evans, op.cit., Ch. 6.

[61] The DHV provided bouncers and stewards for the Anti-League's meeting.

[62] P. J. G. Pulzer, The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria (New York/London, 1964), Ch. 23.

[64] W. Heinemann, Die radikale Frauenbewegung als nationale Gefahr! (Hamburg, 1913).

[65] Quoted in Kirkpatrick, op.cit., p. 110.

[66] Quoted in Mosse, Nazi Culture (op.cit.), pp. 30-47.

[67] Evans, op.cit., Ch. 8.

[68] For references, see Evans, op.cit., Chapters 4-5. The suggestion, in Ulrich Linse, 'Arbeiterschaft und Geburtenentwicklung im Deutschen Kaiserreich von 1871', Archiv für Sozialgeschichte, XII (1972), that the opposite was true, is based on a failure to consult the unpublished sources, and on a false equation of the policy of the BDF's radical Legal Commission with the policy of the BDF itself, which in fact rejected the Legal Commission's report in 1908.

[69] Deutsches Zentralinstitut für Soziale Fragen, Berlin-Dahlem; Archiv des Bundes Deutscher Frauenvereine 5/XIII/5: Bensheimer to Stritt, 18 Aug. 1909, 11 Sept. 1909, Bensheimer to von Forster, 11 Sept. 1909; ibid., 16/II/1: Protokoll der Sitzung des Gesamtvorstandes, 11 March 1910, 13 March 1910.

[70] Irmgard Remme, 'Die Internationalen Beziehungen der deutschen Frauenbewegung vom Ausgang des 19. Jahrhunderts bis 1933' (phil. Diss., West Berlin, 1955), passim.

[71] This estimate is based on the membership figure for the year 1930. For the problems of computing the number of women in the BDF, which remained essentially the same from the turn of the century until its dissolution in 1933, see Deutsches Zentralinstitut für Sozial Fragen, Berlin-Dahlem; Archiv des Bundes Deutscher Frauenvereine, 4/2: cutting of Schleswiger Nachrichten, 2 Jan. 1914.

[72] Jahrbuch des Bundes Deutscher Frauenvereine 1919: 'Programm'.

[73] For this argument, see Evans, op.cit., Chapter 8.

[74] Jahrbuch des Bundes Deutscher Frauenvereine 1919: 'Programm'.

[75] For comments on the social composition of the women's movement and its leadership, see Katherine Thomas, op.cit.

[76] Jahrbuch . . ., loc.cit. For comments on the significance of these words, see Pulzer, op.cit., p. 219 and note.

[77] Agnes von Zahn-Harnack, 'Schlussbericht über die Arbeit des Bundes Deutscher Frauenvereine', Die Frau (June 1933).

[79] Emmy Beckmann (ed.), Des Lebens wie der Liebe Band. Briefe von Gertrud Bäumer (Tübingen, 1956), pp. 50-1, 68.

[80] McIntyre, art.cit., p. 186.

[81] Evans, op.cit., Ch. 7.

[82] Der Geburtenrückgang in Deutschland. Seine Bewertung und Bekämpfung (Berlin, 1912).

[83] Cf. Linse, art.cit.; and Jahrbuch der Frauenbewegung 1916 (Leipzig/Berlin, 1916). The progress of the debate may be registered in subsequent issues of the Jahrbuch, and in the various periodicals devoted to Rassenhygiene and Bevölkerungspolitik. There were also a large number of societies devoted to solving this problem, e.g. Bund der Kinderreichen, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Bevölkerungspolitik, which frequently had their own periodicals. For various levels of government interest in the problem, see Zentrales Staatsarchiv I, Potsdam, Reichsamt des Innern 9342-6 (Massregeln gegen den Geburtenrückgang); Niedersächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Hannover, Hann. 122a XXXVIII Nr. 14 (Rückgang der Geburten); Stadtarchiv Frankfurt am Main, Magistratsakten, 531/2011 (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Bevölkerungspolitik).

[84] For full bibliographical references, see Agnes von Zahn-Harnack and Hans Sveistrup, Die Frauenfrage in Deutschland. Strömungen und Gegenströmungen 1790-1930. Sachlich geordnete und erläuterte Quellenkunde (2nd ed., Tübingen, 1961) and Supplements.

[85] Deutsche Gesellschaft zur Bekämpfung der Geschlechtskrankheiten. The society published a Zeitschrift.

[86] W. Adler (ed.), Reichsgesetz zur Bekämpfung der Geschlechtskrankheiten (Munich, 1929). See the Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Deutschen Reichstags at various sittings over the decade 1917-27 for debates on the subject. Cf. also Puckett, op.cit., pp. 290 ff.

[87] Grunberger, op.cit., Ch. 16-17; Fest, Face of the Third Reich (op.cit.), pp. 397-414.

[88] Horst Becker, Die Familie (Leipzig, 1935), quoted in Weber-Kellermann, op.cit., p. 181.

[89] Bundesarchiv Koblenz, Nachlass Bauer, 1c-d.

[90] Mosse, Crisis of German Ideology (op.cit.), pp. 112-116.

Republic also contains interesting indications of the BDF's attitude on other problems mentioned in this essay.

[92] I have been unable to find any evidence that the BDF was aware of the anti-familial implications of Nazi ideology. For the BDF's qualified welcome for the Third Reich, cf. notes 74-5 above.

[93] Cited in Grunberger, op.cit., p. 323.

[94] For the SPD, see my forthcoming book on Women and Social Democracy in Imperial Germany.

[95] For details, see Stephenson, Women in Nazi Society.

[96] Mason, 'Zur Funktion des Angriffskreigs', art.cit.

[97] Mason, 'Women in Germany', art.cit.

[98] W. S. Allen, The Nazi Seizure of Power. The Experience of a Single German Town (London, 1965).

[99] For a discussion of the Mutterschule, an institution which took up the ideas of many previous attempts to train working-class women in household management, but broke new ground by applying them exclusively to pregnant women, see Mason, 'Women in Germany', art.cit.

[100] Gabrielle Bremme, Die politische Rolle der Frau in Deutschland (Göttingen, 1956).

[101] Ibid.

[102] I owe this point to Mason, 'Women in Germany', art.cit.

[103] Thomas, op.cit., p. 23.

[104] Kirkpatrick, op.cit., pp. 35-6.

[105] Mason, 'Women in Germany', art.cit., makes this point and backs it up with statistics.

[106] Bremme, op.cit.

[107] Evans, op.cit., Ch. 8.

[108] Ibid.

[109] Kater, art.cit.

[111] Bremme, op.cit.

[112] K. D. Bracher, Die Auflösung der Weimarer Republik. Eine Studie des Machtverfalls in der Demokratie (Villingen/Schwarzwald, 4th ed., 1964), p. 476, n. 132; Kuczynski, op.cit., p. 253.

[113] Bremme, op.cit. Cf. Hans Berger, Die Frau in der politischen Entscheidung (Stuttgart, 1933).

[114] Bremme, op.cit.

[115] Mason, 'Women in Germany', art.cit.

[116] Cf. the references to 'the individual, (and) his family' in the Kreisau circle programme, printed in E. Zimmermann and H.-A. Jacobsen, Germans against Hitler (Bonn, 1960), pp. 34-5.

[117] Thönnessen, op.cit.

[118] Stephenson, Women in German Society, op.cit., pp. 388-9, with references.

[119] McIntyre, 'Women and the Professions', art.cit., p. 196 n.2; cf. the Gleichschaltung instructions printed in Kirkpatrick, op.cit.

[120] Mason, 'Women in Germany', art.cit. Mason nevertheless argues that the regime was more popular with women than with men after 1933. For a general survey, see G. Zorn and G. Meyer (eds.), Frauen gegen Hitler. Berichte aus dem Widerstand 1933-1945 (Frankfurt, 1974).

[121] For food riots, cf. my forthcoming work on women and the SPD. For the Nazis' fear of a 'stab in the back', see T. W. Mason, 'The Legacy of 1918 for National Socialism', in A. J. Nicholls and E. Matthias (eds.), German Democracy and the Triumph of Hitler (London, 1971), pp. 215-240. For official concern about food supplies and female morale, see Heinz Boberach (ed.), Meldungen aus dem Reich. Auswahl aus den geheimen Lageberichten des Sicherheitsdienstes der SS 1939-1944 (Munich, 1968), pp. 80, 198, 211, 223, 238, 321-2, 325.

[122] All these details are taken from a report of 18 Nov. 1943, entitled 'Das Zeitgeschehen und Seine Auswirkungen auf Stimmung und Haltung der Frauen', in Boberach (ed.), op.cit., pp. 360-70. Provisions were in fact made for the religious instruction of evacuated children (ibid., p. 364 n.693). The report is incidental evidence of the persistence of Catholic sentiment among the wives of the (largely Social Democrat) miners, also suggested by the voting statistics cited above.

[123] This point is unfortunately entirely missed by Bridenthal, art.cit., who employs the 'three k's' in the title of her essay.

der Schule (Heidelberg, 1973).

[125] Boberach (ed.), op.cit., p. 238.

[126] Ibid., pp. 271, 283, 361.

[127] Ibid., pp. 361-2. Of course, it was more or less obligatory to report that the Führer continued to be admired and trusted by the population. Nevertheless, the point is being made here - by implication - that he was admired and trusted by women more than by men. For attitudes and political behaviour of the pre-industrial peasantry, see especially Roland Mousnier, Peasant Uprisings in Seventeenth Century France, Russia and China (London, 1971), and Pierre Goubert, The Ancien Régime. French Society 1600-1750 (London, 1973), pp. 266-7, and (for further references) pp. 283-5. For some nineteenth century examples, see Franco Venturi, Roots of Revolution (London, 1964), pp. 204-219.

[128] By 1943, indeed, Hitler was becoming increasingly remote from the populace; cf. Albert Speer, Inside the Third Reich (London, 1975), pp. 402, 412.

[129] For further comments on the political immaturity of German women under the Weimar Republic, and its persistence and gradual eradication after 1945, see Bremme, op.cit.

[130] This failure, at least in its social and economic aspects, is the main burden of Stephenson's work (Women in Nazi Society, op.cit.).

[131] Mason, 'Women in Germany' (art.cit.), asserts in his introduction that the Third Reich speeded up this process. But the detailed discussion and statistics in the body of his essay show in fact that it slowed it down. See also Knodel, op.cit., for a full statistical analysis.

[132] Cf. Jürgen Kocka, 'Vorindustrielle Faktoren in der deutschen Industrialisierung' in M. Stürmer (ed.), Das Kaiserliche Deutschland (Düsseldorf, 1970).

[133] Dietrich Orlow, The History of the Nazi Party, Vol. I (Newton Abbot, 1971).

[134] The reader will note that in this concluding paragraph I am attempting to reformulate the arguments advanced by Mason and Bridenthal; further research is urgently needed on a whole range of subjects - above all, however, on the crucial but neglected topic of the social and economic role of religion in modern Germany - before the structure of the German popular mentality in the age of industrialisation can be reconstructed in any detail. It is by careful and painstaking research into subjects such as this, and not by further indulgence in the unsubstantiated speculations of psychoanalysis, that advances in our knowledge are most likely to be made.

Cf. V. R. Berghahn, 'Hamburg im Frühjahr 1945: Stimmungsberichte aus den letzten Wochen des Zweiten Weltkrieges', Hamburgische Geschichts- und Heimatblätter, 8/9 (Dec. 1969), pp. 194-212.