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Transnational Press Discourses on German Antisemitism during the Weimar Republic: The Riots in Berlin's Scheunenviertel, 1923*

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On 7 November 1923, the Manchester Guardian, a renowned British newspaper with a liberal, left-of-centre political stance,¹ reported that severe rioting had broken out in the Scheunenviertel, Berlin's Jewish quarter. Frederick A. Voigt, the paper's correspondent in Berlin during 1920-1932,² called the riots an "antisemitic offensive [...] carefully planned" by the German nationalists, as they were directed against Jews and Jewish-looking individuals only: "Shops owned by Jews were looted. Jewish quarters were raided. Jews were robbed and beaten. In many streets lying outside the Jewish quarter every passer-by was held up by groups of youthful roughs, and if he was at all Jewish in appearance he was severely beaten".³ "The atmosphere for such attacks", Voigt claimed, "has been created by the unbridled anti-Semitic agitation of the Conservative press". The German reactionary press was even exploiting the incident for its own antisemitic propaganda, "describing the rioting as though it were a revolt of starving Germans outraged by Jewish exploitation and usury and blatantly displayed profligacy and luxury".⁴ The reaction of the Berlin police was in Voigt's eyes "particularly discreditable": it did not intervene to protect the Jews from attack, but instead arrested and maltreated Jews "in the most brutal manner". Voigt concluded that the incident was "deeply disquieting not so much as a piece of rowdiness [...] but as a symptom"; it was

*Research for this paper was in its initial stages supported by a research grant from the University of Bremen, for which I wish to express my gratitude. I also wish to thank Albert Gelver and Michael Dreisigacker for researching some of the Italian, French, and Austrian newspapers.

¹ Thomas Wittek, *Auf ewig Feind? Das Deutschlandbild in den britischen Massenmedien nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg*, Munich 2005, pp. 64-66; Stephen E. Koss, *The Rise and Fall of the Political Press in Britain*, vol. II: *The Twentieth Century*, London 1984, pp. 38-39; Deutsches Institut für Zeitungskunde (ed.), *Handbuch der Weltpresse. Eine Darstellung des Zeitungswesens aller Länder*, Berlin 1931, p. 222; John Merrill and Harold A. Fisher, *The World's Great Dailies: Profiles of Fifty Newspapers*, New York 1980, pp. 143-150.

² Wittek, pp. 116-20; Markus Huttner, 'Voigt, Frederick Augustus (1892-1957)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/36665> (accessed 23 February 2012).

³ 'Anti-Jewish Riots in Berlin', in *Manchester Guardian*, 7 November 1923, p. 9.

⁴ *Ibid.* The Author (2014). Published by Oxford University Press on behalf of The Leo Baeck Institute. All rights reserved. For permissions, please email: journals.permissions@oup.com

“a deliberate and carefully planned anti-Semitic offense”.⁵ Voigt’s report in the Manchester Guardian is one of the most detailed and critical contemporary assessments and suggests that the growth of German antisemitism was watched closely and with apprehension by foreign journalists.

The riots in the Scheunenviertel on 5-6 November 1923, at the peak of the economic and political crisis in Germany, marked a climax in the wave of antisemitism that had swept through Germany since the end of the First World War. Anti-Jewish propaganda, discrimination, and violence were an integral part of everyday life in the Weimar Republic. Reactionary and volkisch groups held the Jews responsible for the loss of the war, for Germany’s economic hardships, and for the political upheaval that brushed aside the monarchy. Given the prominent role played by Jews in the revolution and founding of the Weimar Republic, the reactionaries fanatically defamed the latter as a “Jewish republic”. During 1919-1922 numerous Jewish political activists and politicians were murdered, among them Rosa Luxemburg, Kurt Eisner, and Walther Rathenau.⁶ Following a somewhat calmer period during 1924-1929, anti-Jewish propaganda and violence increased again with the rise of the National Socialists during 1930-1933. From the beginnings of the National Socialist movement in 1920, Jew-hatred had been a central part of its political programme; in the final years of the Weimar Republic, antisemitism became almost monopolized by the National Socialists.⁷ Following Hitler’s seizure of power on 30 January 1933, the anti-Jewish excesses virtually exploded, culminating in the nationwide boycott of Jewish businesses on 1 April and in the removal of Jews from the professions shortly afterwards.⁸ The boycott provoked a outcry of indignation in the foreign press and led to mass demonstrations organized in protest against the National Socialists’ treatment of the Jews.⁹

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ulrich Wyrwa, ‘Revolution und Konterrevolution (1918-1923)’, in Wolfgang Benz (ed.), *Handbuch des Antisemitismus*, vol. IV: Ereignisse, Dekrete, Kontroversen, Berlin 2011, pp. 334-337; Cornelia Hecht, *Deutsche Juden und Antisemitismus in der Weimarer Republik*, Bonn 2003, pp. 76-77, 138-139; Reiner Zilkenat, *Der Holocaust ^ Niemand konnte ihn vorhersehen? Niemand kann ihn erklären? Zur Entwicklung des Antisemitismus in Deutschland im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, Berlin 2004, pp. 8-9; Richard J. Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich: How the Nazis Destroyed Democracy and Seized Power in Germany*, London, 2004, pp. 150-52; Saul Friedlander, *The Years of Persecution: Nazi Germany and the Jews 1933-1939*, London 2007, pp. 90-94.

⁷On German antisemitism during 1918-1933, see Werner E. Mosse and Arnold Paucker (eds.), *Deutsches Judentum in Krieg und Revolution 1916-1923. Ein Sammelband*, Tübingen 1971; Werner Jochmann, *Gesellschaftskrise und Judenfeindschaft in Deutschland 1870-1945*, Hamburg 1988; Heinrich A. Winkler, ‘Die deutsche Gesellschaft der Weimarer Republik und der Antisemitismus. Juden als “Blitzableiter”’, in Wolfgang Benz and Werner Bergmann (eds.), *Volkmord und Vorurteil. Entwicklungslinien des Antisemitismus*, Freiburg 1997, pp. 341-362; Dirk Walter, *Antisemitische Kriminalität und Gewalt. Judenfeindschaft in der Weimarer Republik*, Bonn 1999; Donald L. Niewyk, *The Jews in Weimar Germany*, 2nd edn., New Brunswick ^ London 2001; Michael Wildt, *Volksgemeinschaft als Selbstermächtigung. Gewalt gegen Juden in der deutschen Provinz 1919 bis 1939*, Hamburg 2007; Zilkenat, *Holocaust*; Hecht.

⁸Evans, pp. 431-436. Friedlander provides a detailed account of the unfolding of National Socialist antisemitism.

⁹Felicitas von Selchow, ‘Antisemitism in Weimar Germany as Seen by the British Press 1918-1933’, unpublished MPhil thesis, University of Cambridge 1995, pp. 76-92; Andrew Sharf, ‘The British Press and the Holocaust’, in *Yad Vashem Studies*, vol. 5 (1963), pp. 169-191 (here pp. 169-174); Deborah E. Lipstadt, ‘The American Press and the Persecution of German Jewry: The Early Years 1933-1935’,

However, to the international public Hitler's persecution of the Jews did not come without forewarning. Throughout the Weimar Republic, foreign newspapers reported continually on antisemitic occurrences in Germany. In particular the antisemitic wave during 1918-1923, instigated by reactionary forces, aroused the apprehension of the press; it was feared that it might have a destabilizing effect on the young German democracy. During the later years of the Weimar Republic, foreign journalists monitored closely the growing National Socialist movement with its anti-Jewish ideology; some, though few, even warned of the consequences for Jewish life in Germany should Hitler assume power.¹⁰

Still, the contemporary media perceptions of Weimar antisemitism have hardly been studied. Whereas the press responses, specifically those of British and American newspapers, to the persecution of the Jews after 1933 and to the Holocaust have aroused scholarly interest since the early 1960s,¹¹ research into the public discourses on Weimar antisemitism is still in its early stages.¹² Recent studies of Anglo-American press reporting on the Weimar Republic do not even touch on this matter.¹³ The coverage in French, Italian, and Austrian newspapers has been altogether neglected. Yet a glance at the contemporary sources shows that foreign

in LBI Year Book, vol.29 (1984), pp.27-55 (here pp.27-43); Frank Bosch, 'Medien im Nationalsozialismus. Transnationale Perspektiven', in *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht*, vol. 62, nos. 9-10 (2011), pp. 517-529 (here pp. 522-523); Friedlander, p.19; Evans, pp. 434-35; Hannah Ahlheim, 'Deutsche, kauft nicht bei Juden!' Antisemitismus und politischer Boykott in Deutschland 1924 bis 1935, Göttingen, 2011, pp. 248-249; Stephanie Seul, 'Herr Hitler's Nazis Hear an Echo of World Opinion': British and American Press Responses to Nazi Anti-Semitism, September 1930-April 1933', in *Politics, Religion & Ideology*, vol. 14, no. 3 (2013), pp. 412-430.

¹⁰ On British and American press reporting, see von Selchow; Stephanie Seul, 'A Menace to Jews Seen If Hitler Wins': British and American Press Comment on German Anti-Semitism 1918-1933', in *Jewish Historical Studies*, vol. 44 (2012), pp. 75-102 (here pp. 77, 84-92); idem, 'The British Press Coverage of German Anti-Semitism in the Early Weimar Republic, 1918-1923', in Geraldine Horan, Felicity Rash, and Daniel Wildmann (eds.), *English and German Nationalist and Anti-Semitic Discourse, 1871-1945*, Oxford/Frankfurt 2013, pp. 183-209.

¹¹ Andrew Sharf, *The British Press and Jews under Nazi Rule*, London 1964, p. 169; Deborah E. Lipstadt, *Beyond Belief: The American Press and the Coming of the Holocaust 1933-1945*, New York 1986; Tony Kushner, *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination*, Oxford 1994; Robert Moses Shapiro (ed.), *Why Didn't the Press Shout? American and International Journalism During the Holocaust*, Jersey City 2003; Laurel Lej, *Buried by 'The Times': The Holocaust and America's Most Important Newspaper*, Cambridge^ New York 2005; Yosef Gorny, *The Jewish Press and the Holocaust 1939-1945: Palestine, Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union*, New York 2012.

¹² The first studies of British and American press perceptions are von Selchow; Seul, 'A Menace to Jews'; Seul, 'Herr Hitler's Nazis'; Seul, 'British Press Coverage', pp. 183-209; Stephanie Seul, 'A Mad Spirit of Revived and Furious Anti-Semitism'. Wahrnehmung und Deutung des deutschen Antisemitismus in der New York Times und in der Londoner Times, 1918-1923', in Michael Nagel and Moshe Zimmermann (eds.), *Judenfeindschaft und Antisemitismus in der deutschen Presse über fünf Jahrhunderte. Erscheinungsformen, Rezeption, Debatte und Gegenwehr / Five hundred Years of Jew-Hatred and Anti-Semitism in the German Press: Manifestations and Reactions*, 2 vols., Bremen 2013, vol. II, pp. 499-525; Christoph Kreuzmüller, 'Augen im Sturm. Britische und amerikanische Zeitungsberichte über die Judenverfolgung in Berlin 1918-1938', in *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, vol. 62, no. 1 (2014), pp. 25-48.

¹³ Wittek; Carmen Müller, *Weimar im Blick der USA. Amerikanische Auslandskorrespondenten und öffentliche Meinung zwischen Perzeption und Realität*, Münster 1997. An exception is Brigitte Granzow's *A Mirror of Nazism: British Opinion and the Emergence of Hitler 1929-1933*, London 1964.

newspapers reported frequently on Weimar antisemitism. They reveal its European, indeed global, dimension, for anti-Jewish incidents provoked intense press responses and reactions beyond Germany's borders. Accordingly, they were no longer of national, i.e. German, public interest alone, but triggered public debates abroad on Jewish life and antisemitism in the Weimar Republic. Thus, antisemitism became a "transnational media event", conceived as an occurrence provoking intense media responses and interactions across national and cultural borders.¹⁴

This study seeks to unveil this transnational dimension of Weimar-era antisemitism, that is, the way that Jew-hatred was perceived, transmitted, represented, and publicly debated in the contemporary press outside Germany's borders. As Nagel and Zimmermann have recently argued, the press "served as one of the most important platforms for the dissemination of prejudice and hostility to Jews", using words and images to spread, but also to combat, antisemitism. Although newspapers allege to report facts, they select these facts according to the attitudes and expectations of the journalists and their readers.¹⁵ The foreign press discourses on Weimar antisemitism were thus as much a reflection of contemporary attitudes towards Jews as they were shaping the public's perception of, and attitude towards, Jews by projecting antisemitism and its critique into the public arena.

The main focus here is on the transnational press discourses relating to one specific antisemitic incident, namely the riots of 5-6 November 1923 in the Scheunenviertel, a poor Berlin quarter populated by Jewish immigrants from eastern Europe. The incident is important not only because it was the first pogrom-like manifestation of Jew-hatred in the Weimar Republic but also because the riots were specifically targeted at the Jewish immigrants, called "ghetto Jews", or Ostjuden.¹⁶ With their traditional clothing and openly visible Jewish traits they formed an easily identifiable social group whose presence in Germany was disputed even among assimilated German Jews.¹⁷

¹⁴ Frank Bosch, 'Ereignis, Performanz und Medien in historischer Perspektive', in Frank Bosch and Patrick Schmidt (eds.), *Medialisierte Ereignisse. Performanz, Inszenierung und Medien seit dem 18. Jahrhundert*, Frankfurt/New York 2010, pp. 7-29 (here pp. 7-10); Frank Bosch, 'European Media Events', in *European History Online (EGO)*, <http://ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/european-media/european-media-events/frank-boesch-european-media-events> (accessed 12 February 2014); Volker Barth, 'Medien, Transnationalität und Globalisierung 1830-1960. Neuerscheinungen und Desiderata', in *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, vol. 51 (2011), pp. 717-736 (here pp. 724-727).

¹⁵ Nagel and Zimmermann, vol. I, pp. XXXVI-XXXVII, quotation on p. XXXVI.

¹⁶ The term "ghetto Jew" had been used since the nineteenth century to describe Jews from eastern Europe, called Ostjuden: Steven E. Aschheim, *Brothers and Strangers: The East European Jew in German and German-Jewish Consciousness, 1800-1923*, Madison, WI 1982, pp. 5-8. The word "pogrom" is of Russian origin and denominates violent attacks by a dominating civilian group against Jews, but also against other ethnic minorities. See Jeffrey Kopstein, 'Pogrom', in Dan Diner (ed.), *Enzyklopädie jüdischer Geschichte und Kultur*, 7 vols., Stuttgart/Weimar, 2013, vol. IV, pp. 572-575; John D. Klier, 'The Pogrom Paradigm in Russian history', in John D. Klier and Shlomo Lambroza (eds.), *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russian History*, Cambridge 1992, pp. 13-38.

¹⁷ Von Selchow, p. 50. In detail, see Trude Maurer, *Ostjuden in Deutschland 1918-1933*, Hamburg 1986, pp. 741-759.

The incident sparked extensive press coverage over the course of several days in Germany and abroad. As is argued here, the style of reporting showed visible differences, the dividing line running rather along the political and ideological orientation of the papers than along national affiliation. Thus, several conservative and Catholic papers reported in rather unflattering terms and occasionally even revealed an anti-Jewish bias. While the riots were widely perceived as the first pogrom on German soil in modern times, there was no discussion of the social roots of German antisemitism, nor did the journalists take the incident as an opportunity to investigate the precarious position of the Ostjuden in Germany.

Before elaborating in more detail on these issues I wish, firstly, to introduce the comparative and transnational research design of this study. Secondly, I will illustrate the role of journalists as mediators who set the agenda of public discourse by selecting and rewriting information that became news. And thirdly, I will elucidate the sources available to foreign journalists for writing their stories about Weimar antisemitism. Moreover, I will hint at the way information was exchanged across national borders and transformed during this transnational transfer process.

FOREIGN JOURNALISTS AND ANTISEMITISM IN THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC

Traditionally, the history of the press has been studied from a national perspective.¹⁸ Likewise, studies of the foreign press coverage of the Holocaust have hitherto focused on the press of one nation only.¹⁹ However, in recent years historians and communication scholars have gradually turned towards the transfers, interactions, and mutual perceptions between individuals, groups, organizations, and states across national borders.²⁰ This transnational research perspective is particularly appropriate for studying the historical media.²¹ My study applies a comparative methodology²² and analyses the reporting of newspapers from four nations in Europe and from the United States to highlight the transnational character of the public debate on German antisemitism. I have sought to select a fairly representative newspaper sample in terms of geographic region and political orientation: The Times, the Manchester Guardian, and The Scotsman speak for British opinion; the New York Times, the Chicago Daily Tribune, and the Christian Science

¹⁸Frank Bosch, *Mediengeschichte. Vom asiatischen Buchdruck zum Fernsehen*, Frankfurt/New York, 2011, pp. 19-20; Frank Bosch, 'Medienschichte der Moderne. Zugänge, Befunde und deutsche Perspektiven', in *Bohemia*, vol. 51 (2011), pp. 21-40 (here pp. 30-31); Barth, pp. 717-721.

¹⁹Sharf, *British Press*; Lipstadt, *Beyond Belief*; von Selchow; and Lej. Shapiro does offer a multinational perspective on the foreign press coverage of the Holocaust in ten nations. However, all contributions focus on one nation only and do not engage in direct comparisons. See Gorny, p. 2.

²⁰Akira Iriye and Pierre-Yves Saunier (eds.), *The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History*, New York 2009; Gunilla Budde, Sebastian Conrad, and Oliver Janz (eds.), *Transnationale Geschichte. Themen, Tendenzen und Theorien*, Göttingen 2006; Hartmut Wessler and Michael Brüggemann, *Transnationale Kommunikation. Eine Einführung*, Wiesbaden 2012.

²¹Bosch, *Mediengeschichte*, pp. 19-20; Bosch, 'Medien', pp. 517-19; and Barth, pp. 717-721.

²²See Gorny.

Monitor for the United States. Italy is represented by the *Corriere della Sera*, *La Stampa*, *La Giustizia*, and the *Osservatore Romano*. For France I reviewed *Le Figaro*, *Le Temps*, *Le Journal des Debats*, *Le Petit Parisien*, *L'Ouest-Eclair*, *L'Action française*, *La Croix*, *Le Matin*, and *L'Humanite*. Finally, the *Neue Freie Presse*, the *NeuigkeitsWelt-Blatt*, the *Neues 8 Uhr Blatt*, the *Reichspost*, and the *Wiener Zeitung* represent Austria. Since for reasons of space it is impossible to introduce all these newspapers, I have sought to provide, where possible, some information on their political orientation and national importance when they are mentioned for the first time. Many newspapers are now available in digitized format online; this applies especially to British, American, French, and Austrian papers.²³ In contrast, only few Italian newspapers have been digitized.²⁴

The findings presented here derive from a thorough analysis of the newspaper content, that is, of what foreign audiences could actually read in the press about German antisemitism. This approach not only allows us to reconstruct the facts reported in newspapers and that shaped public discourse, it also reveals the ideological undercurrents that influenced the journalists' perceptions of German antisemitism. For the press discourses should not simply be regarded as a mirror of events in Germany, but rather as the product of a conscious or unconscious selection process on the part of journalists and editors.²⁵ According to the theory of "gatekeeping" in journalism and communication research, journalists and editors select or reject, write, edit, position, and schedule information to become news. This way, they act as "gatekeepers" who interpret the world for their audience, thereby influencing the audience's perception of reality.²⁶ The theory of "agenda setting" moreover indicates the process whereby the mass media presents certain issues more frequently than others with the effect that the public perceives those issues as more significant. Hence, the more a certain issue is covered in the media, the more important it appears in the public's eye. However, the selection process is determined less by a conscious desire on the part of the journalists to withhold

²³Gale Cengage Learning offers access to The Times Digital Archive (subject to payment). For the Manchester Guardian (<http://calm.guardian.co.uk/CalmView/default.aspx>), The Scotsman (<http://archive.scotsman.com/>), Christian Science Monitor (http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/csmonitor_historic/advancedsearch.html), and New York Times (<http://www.nytimes.com/ref/membercenter/nytarchive.html>) access is also subject to payment. French and Austrian newspapers are freely available at the websites "Gallica" (Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF), <http://gallica.bnf.fr/html/presse-et-revues/les-principaux-quotidiens>), and "ANNO" (Austrian National Library, <http://anno.onb.ac.at/>). See also the regularly updated Wikipedia List of Online Newspaper Archives http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_online_newspaper_archives (all websites accessed 30 May 2014). On digital methodologies, see Bob Nicholson, 'The Digital Turn: Exploring the Methodological Possibilities of Digital Newspaper Archives', in *Media History*, vol. 19, no. 1 (2013), pp. 59-73; James Mussell, *The Nineteenth-Century Press in the Digital Age*, Basingstoke, 2012.

²⁴<http://www.archiviola stampa.it/> (La Stampa); <http://digilib.netribe.it/bdr01/Sezione.jsp?idSezione=43>, (La Giustizia) (both websites accessed 30 May 2014).

²⁵Seul, 'Herr Hitler's Nazis', p. 415; Seul, 'A Menace to Jews', p. 80.

²⁶Pamela J. Schoemaker, Tim P. Vos, and Stephen D. Reese, 'Journalists as Gatekeepers', in Karin Wahl-Jorgensen and Thomas Hanitzsch (eds.), *The Handbook of Journalism Studies*, New York/London, 2009, pp. 73-87 (here p. 73); Michael Schudson, 'The Sociology of News Production', in *Media, Culture & Society*, vol. 11 (1989), pp. 263-282.

certain information from the public than by the need to focus a day's news on a few events, for reasons of lack of space.²⁷ Consequently, the press never acts as a neutral observer but is an actor who, by selecting items as newsworthy and by reporting and commenting on them in a certain manner, shapes the public's perception of them.²⁸ Deborah E. Lipstadt moreover argues that "[the journalists'] values inform their view and understanding of events [...]. And since people's values tend to reflect those of the society they are part of, our examination of how the [...] journalists [...] treated the news of the persecution of European Jewry will also be an examination of the values of this society".²⁹

During the Weimar Republic, foreign journalists gathered information on German antisemitism from a variety of sources. Many papers had their own correspondents in Germany who were in contact with individuals and political institutions who supplied them with relevant material. Other major sources of information were reports from news agencies such as Reuters and the Press Association in Great Britain, Associated Press and United Press in the United States,³⁰ or the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, an international wire service for Jewish news. The latter was often used by the New York Times.³¹ French newspapers relied on the services of Agence Havas,³² the Italian press on Agenzia Stefani,³³ and Austrian newspapers on the Amtliche Nachrichtenstelle (ANA).³⁴

The most important source of information seems, however, to have been the German press. The foreign correspondents were well informed about German newspapers and their political orientation.³⁵ They regularly evaluated liberal papers, e.g. the Berliner Tageblatt, Vossische Zeitung, and Frankfurter Zeitung; left-wing papers, for instance the Vorwärts (Social Democratic Party); Freiheit (Independent Social Democratic Party); Rote Fahne (German Communist Party); and

²⁷ Renita Coleman, Maxwell McCombs, Donald Shaw, and David Weaver, 'Agenda Setting', in Wahl-Jorgensen and Hanitzsch, pp. 147-160 (here pp. 147-48).

²⁸ Lipstadt, *Beyond Belief*, p. 3; Stephen Vella, 'Newspapers', in Miriam Dobson and Benjamin Ziemann (eds.), *Reading Primary Sources: The Interpretation of Texts from Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century History*, London, 2009, pp. 192-208 (here pp. 192-193).

²⁹ Lipstadt, *Beyond Belief*, p. 10.

³⁰ Von Selchow, pp. 9-19; *Weltpresse* (1931), pp. 23-24, 219-220; Karl Bomer in collaboration with Institut für Zeitungswissenschaft, Universität Berlin, and Außenpolitisches Amt der NSDAP (eds.), *Handbuch der Weltpresse. Eine Darstellung des Zeitungswesens aller Länder*, Frankfurt 1937, pp. 45, 426-428; Jonathan Fenby, *The International News Services*, New York 1986; Donald Read, *The Power of News: The History of Reuters 1849-1989*, Oxford 1992.

³¹ Lei, pp. 19, 47-48. See also Verena Dohrn, 'Diplomacy in the Diaspora: The Jewish Telegraphic Agency in Berlin (1922-1933)', in *LBI Year Book*, vol. 54 (2009), pp. 219-241.

³² Antoine Lefebvre, Havas. *Les arcanes du pouvoir*, Paris 1992; Pierre Frederix, *Un Siecle de Chasse Aux Nouvelles. De l'agence d'Information Havas a l'agence France-Presse (1835-1957)*, Paris 1959.

³³ Sergio Lepri, Francesco Arbitrio, and Giuseppe Cultrera, *Informazione e potere in un secolo di storia italiana. L'agenzia Stefani da Cavour a Mussolini*, Florence 2001.

³⁴ Edith Dorfer and Wolfgang Pensold, *Die Macht der Nachricht. Die Geschichte der Nachrichtenagenturen in Osterreich*, Wien 2001.

³⁵ For the British papers, see 'Through German Eyes', in *The Times*, 8 May 1919, p. 11; 'Buying up German Newspapers', in *ibid.*, 7 May 1921, p. 14; 'Herr Hitler's Newspaper', in *Manchester Guardian*, 1 October 1930, p. 14. See also Seul, 'A Menace to Jews', pp. 82-83; and Seul, 'British Press Coverage', pp. 191-192.

conservative and Catholic papers, e.g. the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* (German People's Party, DVP) and *Germania* (German Centre Party, Catholic).³⁶ Occasionally, also nationalistic and reactionary papers with an antisemitic bias were quoted, for instance the *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger* (German National People's Party, DNVP), *Deutsche Tageszeitung*, *Kreuz-Zeitung*, *Tägliche Rundschau*, or *Munchener (later Volkischer) Beobachter*.³⁷ The significance of German newspapers as a source of information is evidenced by the following quotation from *The Times*, the influential British conservative paper: "An adequate survey of the news in Germany is impossible to-day owing to a general strike of the Berlin printers, which has caused all newspapers excepting the *Rote Fahne* to cease publication".³⁸

Foreign papers frequently backed up their arguments with quotations from German newspapers. Thereby they absorbed and transmitted either unconsciously or uncritically to their readership the German view of antisemitism. To give an example, *The Times* repeatedly characterized Jewish revolutionaries as unpopular foreign elements aiming to spread Bolshevism in Germany.³⁹ On 1 March 1919, for instance, it backed up its arguments with quotations from the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Germania*, and *Kreuz-Zeitung* without, however, informing its audience of their reactionary and antisemitic orientations. Thus, an article from the *Kreuz-Zeitung* defamed Eisner as "one of the most pernicious representatives of Jewry [...]. He united in his character in the highest degree two of the most idiosyncratic qualities of his race ^ its historical internationalism (for Eisner was an alien by birth), and its congenital vanity, which is so opposed to German practical sense".⁴⁰ Reports such as these reflect on the one hand the anti-Jewish bias in the German source and on the other hand a negative bias on the part of the British reporter, testifying to the anti-Jewish prejudice and fear of Bolshevism widespread in Britain after the First World War.⁴¹ Moreover they show how foreign papers took up information from the German

³⁶ 'Through German Eyes', in *The Times*, 1 March 1919, p. 9; 'Through German Eyes', in *ibid.*, 10 March 1919, p. 9. On the political orientations of German newspapers, see Heinz-Dietrich Fischer, *Deutsche Zeitungen des 17. bis 20. Jahrhunderts*, Pullach 1972; *idem*, *Handbuch der politischen Presse in Deutschland 1480-1980. Synopse rechtlicher, struktureller und wirtschaftlicher Grundlagen der Tendenzpublizistik im Kommunikationsfeld*, Dusseldorf 1981, pp. 399-440; Kurt Koszyk, *Deutsche Presse 1914-1945*, Berlin 1972, pp. 240-336; Burkhard Asmuss, *Republik ohne Chance? Akzeptanz und Legitimation der Weimarer Republik in der deutschen Tagespresse zwischen 1918 und 1923*. Berlin^New York 1994, pp. 29-32, 39-66; Bernhard Fulda, *Press and Politics in the Weimar Republic*, Oxford 2009, pp. 13-44.

³⁷ 'Through German Eyes', in *The Times*, 8 May 1919, p. 11; 'Fateful Day in Berlin', in *ibid.*, 31 August 1921, p. 10; *Seul*, 'A Menace to Jews', pp. 82-83.

³⁸ 'Berlin Without Newspapers', in *The Times*, 3 July 1922, p. 9. See also *Seul*, 'British Press Coverage', p. 191. On *The Times* see Merrill and Fisher, pp. 320-329; *Welt* *Presse* (1931), p. 224.

³⁹ 'Berlin Tremors', in *The Times*, 28 February 1919, p. 9; 'Through German Eyes', in *ibid.*, 17 April 1919, p. 11; 'Through German Eyes', in *ibid.*, 25 April 1919, p. 11; *Seul*, 'British Press Coverage', pp. 192-193; *Seul*, 'A Menace to Jews', p. 83.

⁴⁰ 'Through German Eyes', in *The Times*, 1 March 1919, p. 9; *Seul*, 'British Press Coverage', p. 193; and *Seul*, 'A Menace to Jews', p. 83. Similar comments can be found in American papers. See, for example, 'Kurt Eisner', in *Christian Science Monitor*, 11 March 1919, p. 3.

⁴¹ *Seul*, 'A Menace to Jews', pp. 83-84. On British fears of Bolshevism and negative attitudes towards Jews, see Sharman Kadish, "'Boche, Bolshie and the Jewish Bogey': The Russian Revolution and Press Anti-Semitism in Britain 1917-21", in *Patterns of Prejudice*, vol. 22 (1988), pp. 24-39.

press, representing it as a typical piece of German opinion regarding Jewish revolutionaries without commenting on the biased nature of the source.

Information was thus transmitted and exchanged across national borders on a vast scale. In this process the German press played a key role. Since German papers were often quoted verbatim or in substance by the foreign press, they contributed considerably to the shaping of the public perception of Weimar antisemitism abroad. The same transnational quality applies to reports taken from globally operating news agencies. In general, however, it should be emphasized that the relationship between the German press and antisemitism during the Weimar Republic is a thinly researched field. We still lack a comprehensive study of the role of the press in spreading or combating antisemitism.⁴² General studies of the daily press in the Weimar Republic have not paid attention to the issue of Jew-hatred. Nevertheless there are several regional studies or studies of Weimar antisemitism in diverse press genres such as the Catholic press, the political party press, or popular magazines.⁴³

The foregoing overview has sought to give an idea of the extent to which information was transmitted and exchanged across national borders, thereby enabling foreign audiences to form an opinion on German antisemitism. In the following I will focus on the riots in the Scheunenviertel and the discourses they sparked in the German and foreign press.

THE RIOTS IN THE SCHEUNENVIERTEL ON 5 AND 6 NOVEMBER 1923 AND THEIR DISCUSSION IN THE GERMAN PRESS

When the riots broke out in November 1923, Germany was at the height of the economic and political crises that had been brewing for many months past.⁴⁴ Belgian and French troops had occupied the Ruhr and hyperinflation and mass unemployment had impoverished large sections of the population. Furthermore, separatist movements and reactionary putsch attempts endangered the very existence of the republic. Antisemitism likewise reached a peak, the Ostjuden being

⁴²An effort to fill this gap is Nagel and Zimmermann.

⁴³Seul, 'A Menace to Jews', p. 84. Studies on the Weimar press are Fulda; Koszyk; Fischer, *Deutsche Zeitungen*; Fischer, *Handbuch*; and Karsten Schilling, *Das zerstörte Erbe. Berliner Zeitungen der Weimarer Republik im Portrat*, Norderstedt 2011. On the role of the press in spreading of antisemitism, see Walter; Asmuss; Martin Ulmer, *Antisemitismus in Stuttgart 1871-1945. Studien zum öffentlichen Diskurs und Alltag*, Berlin 2011; Walter Hannot, *Die Judenfrage in der katholischen Tagespresse Deutschlands und Österreichs 1923-1933*, Mainz 1990; Olaf Kistenmacher, 'Arbeit und "jüdisches Kapital". Antisemitische Aussagen in der Tageszeitung der KPD, "Die Rote Fahne", während der Weimarer Republik, 1918 bis 1933', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Bremen, 2011; and Julia Schafer, *Vermessen, gezeichnet, verlacht. Judenbilder in populären Zeitschriften 1918-1933*, Frankfurt 2005.

⁴⁴For detailed analyses, see Maurer, *Ostjuden*, pp. 329-44; David Clay Large, "'Out with the Ostjuden': The Scheunenviertel Riots in Berlin, November 1923", in Christhard Hoffmann, Werner Bergmann, and Helmut Walser Smith (eds.), *Exclusionary Violence: Antisemitic Riots in Modern German History*, Ann Arbor 2002, pp. 123-140.



Jewish merchant in the Grenadierstrasse, 1933. Photographer: P. Buch. Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-1987-0413-503. Reproduced with permission of the German Federal Archive (Bundesarchiv).

the first and most vulnerable victims of the increasingly radical defamation and violence.⁴⁵

During and after the First World War, tens of thousands of Jews from Russia, Poland, and the Ukraine had come to Germany as forced labourers or as refugees escaping persecution. They differed from the existing German-Jewish community in their social, cultural, and religious habits; notably, their mother tongue was Yiddish. In Berlin the majority of the Ostjuden settled in the crowded Scheunenviertel district near Alexanderplatz; many of them were poor or unemployed. Typical of the area were Jewish groceries and restaurants, bookshops, small tailor's workshops and shoe repair shops in cellars, and a multitude of cafes, prayer rooms, and Jewish charitable societies. Many shops had signs in Hebrew.⁴⁶

⁴⁵Ursula Buttner, Weimar. Die überforderte Republik, Bonn 2008, pp. 164-206; Zilkens, Holocaust, pp. 10-11; von Selchow, p. 50; Seul, 'A Menace to Jews', p. 89; and Seul, 'British Press Coverage', p. 199.

⁴⁶Trude Maurer, 'Eastern European Jews in Berlin from the Late 19th Century to the 1930s', in Klaus J. Bade, Pieter C. Emmer, Leo Lucassen, and Jochen Oltmer (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Migration and Minorities in Europe: From the 17th Century to the Present*, Cambridge, 2011, pp. 332-334; Rainer Zilkens, 'Der Pogrom am 5. und 6. November 1923', in Thomas Raschke, Horst Helas, Frank Morgner, and Dieter Weigert (eds.), *Das Scheunenviertel. Spuren eines verlorenen Berlins*, Berlin, 1994, pp. 95-103 (here p. 96); Anne-Christin Saß, *Berliner Luftmenschen. Osteuropaisch-jüdische Migranten in der Weimarer Republik*, Göttingen 2012, pp. 113-116, pp. 118-119; von Selchow pp. 52-53.



Jewish sales stall in the Grenadierstrasse, 1933. Photographer: P. Buch. Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-1987-0413-508. Reproduced with permission of the German Federal Archive (Bundesarchiv).

Although the absolute numbers of Ostjuden were small, they made up no more than 5.6 per cent of the population in central Berlin, and even in the Grenadierstrasse, which had the highest percentage of eastern Jews, they counted only one third of the overall population in that street; they were widely regarded as an economic liability and a security risk and literally called “the danger from the east”.⁴⁷ The German reactionary and volkisch press furcely agitated against them and highly exaggerated their numbers in order to dramatize the alleged “food” of Jewish immigrants. The Ostjuden were portrayed as dirty, work-shy, and as “Schieber”, that is, black marketeers and profiteers.⁴⁸ Moreover, they were accused of being communists and anarchists spreading revolutionary and Bolshevist ideas and to have participated in disproportionate numbers in the

⁴⁷ Sa□□, pp. 117-118, 362 (quotation p. 118); Large, pp. 129-130. On propaganda against the Ostjuden, see Maurer, Ostjuden, pp. 104-190; Jon Gunnar Molstre Simonsen, ‘Perfect Targets: Antisemitism and Eastern Jews in Leipzig, 1919-1923’, in LBI Year Book, vol. 51 (2006), pp. 79-101 (here pp. 82-90).

⁴⁸ Sa□□, p. 363. The term “Schieber” originated in the nineteenth century and denominates someone doing dishonest and/or illegal business. After the First World War it acquired an antisemitic connotation and was used to accuse Jews of dealing in scarce goods in order to make profits. See Friedrich Kluge, Ethymologisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache, 25th edn., Berlin 2011; Gerhard Wahrig et al., Brockhaus-Wahrig. Deutsches Wörterbuch in sechs Bänden, vol. V, Wiesbaden 1983; Ulmer, pp. 231-32.

November revolution and the founding of the republic.⁴⁹ Even the German liberal press, which was to a large extent in the hands of Jewish proprietors and editors, and assimilated German Jews, regarded the presence of the Ostjuden as a reason for the increase of antisemitism in Germany since 1918, the more so since several Jewish revolutionaries and radicals had been of eastern European origin (e.g., Kurt Eisner and Rosa Luxemburg).⁵⁰ Consequently, during the early years of the Weimar Republic, eastern Jews were frequently victims of antisemitic insults and violence. The Berlin city administration, the Prussian Landtag (state parliament), and especially the reactionary Bavarian government repeatedly tried to intern or even drive out the eastern Jews.⁵¹

In November 1923 the agitation against the Ostjuden culminated in pogrom-like excesses in the Scheunenviertel. The riots were precipitated by the sudden rise in the price of bread from 23 to 140 billion Reichsmark per loaf, an arbitrary increase even in the light of the hyperinflation at that time. On the morning of 5 November a large populace of unemployed gathered in front of the employment office in the Alexanderstrasse to wait for their unemployment allowance. As contemporary liberal and Social Democratic newspapers reported, nationalist agitators suddenly arrived distributing antisemitic leaflets and calling for reprisals against the “Jewish profiteers”. When at 11.30 a.m. the job office announced that there would be no money issued on that day, a furious mob, counting thousands of unemployed workers, stormed the nearby Scheunenviertel shouting “kill the Jews”. They looted and destroyed Jewish shops, devastated flats, and maltreated Jews on the streets.⁵² The excesses continued throughout the night and during 6 November. As the contemporary observers reported, the police arrived late and in small numbers and initially did not intervene to stop the rioters. Moreover, the police played down the antisemitic character of the riots and blamed the victims—the Ostjuden—for having provoked the excesses by their own behaviour. Only on 6 November did the police finally treat the riots as an emergency and send out substantial forces to restore order.⁵³ The scene is represented in *Zeitbilder*, the Sunday supplement of the liberal *Vossische Zeitung*, of 11 November: two photographs show police patrolling the Scheunenviertel in an attempt to restore order.⁵⁴

⁴⁹Winkler, pp. 345-346; von Selchow, pp. 51-52; Zilkenat, *Holocaust*, p. 12; and Zilkenat, ‘Pogrom’ p. 96. On the antisemitic charges in the reactionary and volkisch press, see Asmuss, pp. 221-230, 241-244, 299-301; and Maurer, *Ostjuden*, pp. 104-190.

⁵⁰Maurer, *Ostjuden*, pp. 479-491, 766-7; Zilkenat, *Holocaust*, p. 1; Seul, ‘A Mad Spirit’, p. 517.

⁵¹Saß, pp. 364-365; Zilkenat, ‘Pogrom’, p. 96; Jochmann, pp. 165-167. For detailed accounts, see Reiner Pommerin, ‘Die Ausweisung von “Ostjuden” aus Bayern 1923. Ein Beitrag zum Krisenjahr der Weimarer Republik’, in *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, vol. 34 (1986), pp. 311-340; Maurer, *Ostjuden*, pp. 324-435; Walter, pp. 52-79; and von Selchow, pp. 53-55.

⁵²Zilkenat, *Holocaust*, pp. 11-12; Zilkenat, ‘Pogrom’, p. 98; Hecht, pp. 177-178; Philipp Wegehaupt, ‘Pogrom im Scheunenviertel (1923)’, in Benz, *Handbuch*, vol. IV, pp. 299-300; Maurer, *Ostjuden*, pp. 329-330; Large, pp. 130-131.

⁵³Zilkenat, ‘Pogrom’, pp. 99-100; Wegehaupt, p. 300; Walter, pp. 152-153; Hecht, pp. 178-79; Large, pp. 131-134; Maurer, *Ostjuden*, pp. 330-334.

⁵⁴*Zeitbilder*, supplement of *Vossische Zeitung*, 11 November 1923, p. 1; (<http://zefys.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/list/title/zdb/27112366/20283027/>, accessed 30 May 2014).



Die Wänderrama-Regatta in Berlin: Einführung der Wänderrama durch Schuppenkahn, Potsdam.

DAS BILD

Novelle von Willi Lehner

Sie fuhr auf — entsappte sich bobri, daß sie ganz in den Anblick des Wildes versunken war. Welch geheimnisvolle Anziehung bewirkt es! Sie hatte sie gesaugen, unter den vielen alten Gemälden des Kunstliebhabers gerade dieses zu wählen, das, von Staub fast unkenntlich, im finsternen Winkel des still erhellten Raumes hing. Ein Strom schauererregten Verlangens floss von der dunklen Leinwand auszugehen — fast mechanisch hatte sie seinen Preis zu wissen begehrt, ihn, obgleich er sehr hoch, ohne Hintergrund begehrt. Und wunderlicher — als sie das Bild anfaß, den Laden verlassen hatte, war es ihrer Erinnerung entrückt, wie ausgelöscht. Am Abend erst, spät in der Nacht, als sie aus einem Zieh, das man ihr, der geleisteten Künstlerin, gegeben, zurückgelehrt, lächelte es von neuem seine unheimliche Macht auf sie aus. Sie war in ihr Wohnzimmer getreten, das der stierende Schein des Kaminsfeuers in rote Dämmerung tauchte. Unschlüssig wandte sie den Spieghel über einen Stuhl, trieb über die schmerzende Stirn — wie die alles, wie leer! Ihre Seele war

hochschwebend wie ihr Geist. Ruht, ach, wie sie die Nacht erträgt! Was mühte Erfolg, Bemühen! Wohl war die Neige im Rhythmus ihrer zerklüfteten, einsamen Lebens, diesem Rhythmus, der, reformuliert, Verantwortung! Warum — kein Ende machen! Ein Wägen hat ihren Mund — ihre Lippen schloßen sich plötzlich, ihr Bild wurde hart, dort am

Ramin, von den fahrenden Bildern des Feuers in gelblichem Licht erweckt, fand das Bild. Die lebensgroße, schlanke Gestalt des Mannes löste aus dem Rahmen treten zu wollen. Sein frisches, blaues Gesicht, vom lichten Alter glänzend, umrahmt dunkle, auf die Schultern fallende Haare. Schief hob es sich über dem weißen Spinnweben von der selbstigen Schwärze des Hofes, dem rothbraunen Abergang, vom düstern Gewitterhimmel des Hintergrundes ab. Eine der schmalen Hände ruhte auf der Hüfte am Griff des Degenes, die andere war bescheiden vorgeföhrt, deutete, wie der bilderschwimmende Bild der dunklen Augen, auf ein bestimmtes Ziel. Ein verdächtiges, höflich-grundames Lächeln umspielte den hellroten Mund, durchdringt vom verheerendem Schmerz.

Der gekannte Bild der erregten Frau verließ sich eingehend forschend in dies Bild. Welche Gedanken hatten sich hinter dieser hohen Stirn gelehrt, während die Augen drohten, die Lippen sich in wildem Schrei zu lösen? Aber was er, dem jungen Mann, die hebräische auch hinter? Der Bildhauer hatte etwas von einem politischen Oberen erzählt — Irene Elmanlar, des Gemäldes nannte Bilder und Vorbild, doch war er auch war, noch über das Jenseits hinaus mußte die Augen seine harten Verjün-



Eine Piazza in der Oberbleichstraße in Berlin: Abführung der Verhafteten in Kufas, Potsdam.

The Berlin and German provincial press reported extensively over several days on the riots. Although the majority of the papers acknowledged that the excesses had an antisemitic dimension, some papers downplayed the importance of this aspect or did not comment on it at all.⁵⁵ For instance, the *Freiburger Zeitung* and the *Coburger Zeitung* reported on the riots without going into detail; the *Freiburger Zeitung* did not even tell its audience that the excesses had an antisemitic character.⁵⁶

Liberal and socialist newspapers unanimously condemned the riots, calling them a disgrace, a rupture of civilization, and the first orchestrated pogrom in the German capital. The *Vorwärts* wrote: “Berlin hat sein Judenpogrom gehabt. Berlin ist geschändet worden. Eine Schmach für ein Volk, das sich zu den zivilisiertesten zählt”.⁵⁷ The paper expressed alarm that nationalistic agitators had succeeded in exploiting agitated workers of the traditional electorate of the left-wing parties for their antisemitic aims.⁵⁸ The *Vossische Zeitung* emphasized the systematic character of the riots, as the plundering and the attacks were obviously directed at Jewish businesses and Jews and Jewish-looking persons only. The police, the paper held, had initially done nothing to prevent the rioting.⁵⁹ Like the *Vorwärts*, the *Vossische Zeitung* blamed the political right, arguing that nationalist papers such as the *Deutsche Zeitung* had propagated hatred against the Jews for years.⁶⁰

Similarly, the Jewish press condemned the riots as the first pogrom and a direct consequence of the systematic agitation in the nationalist and volkisch press. In fact, such an occurrence would eventually occur had been predicted by many since 1919.⁶¹ On 23 November the *C.V.-Zeitung*, the organ of the Central-Verein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens (Central Association of German Citizens of Jewish Faith), dedicated several pages to the riots, reprinting antisemitic articles from nationalist and volkisch newspapers to illustrate its charge.⁶² Likewise, on 9 November the *Zionist Jüdische Rundschau* devoted the first three pages to the riots, calling them in bold letters “Die Schicksalsstunde des deutschen Judentums” that is, the decisive hour of the fate of German Jewry. The paper argued that the attacks showed that the achievements of Jewish emancipation were under threat and that

⁵⁵ Large, p. 124.

⁵⁶ ‘Vermischte Nachrichten’, in *Freiburger Zeitung*, 6 November 1923, first edn., p. 2; ‘Vermischte Nachrichten’, in *Freiburger Zeitung*, 7 November 1923, second edn., p. 2; ‘Unruhen in Berlin’, in *Coburger Zeitung*, 7 November 1923, p. 1 (<http://www.ub.uni-freiburg.de/?id=117> (Freiburger Zeitung); <http://www.bayerische-landesbibliothek-online.de/coburger-zeitung1> (Coburger Zeitung); (both websites accessed 30 May 2014).

⁵⁷ ‘Arme Betrogene!’, in *Vorwärts*, 8 November 1923, evening edn., quoted in Walter, p. 151, and Maurer, *Ostjuden*, p. 337.

⁵⁸ Zilkens, *Holocaust*, p. 14; Walter, p. 151-153; Asmuss, pp. 519-524, 531-534; Maurer, *Ostjuden*, pp. 337-338; Large, pp. 134-135; Wegehaupt, p. 300.

⁵⁹ ‘Plünderungen von Geschäften und Backerladen’, in *Vossische Zeitung*, 5 November 1923, evening edn., p. 4; ‘Die Ausschreitungen in Berlin’, in *ibid.*, 6 November 1923, morning edn., p. 1 (<http://zeffs.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/list/title/zdb/27112366/>, accessed 30 May 2014).

⁶⁰ ‘Die Schuldigen’, in *Vossische Zeitung*, 7 November 1923, evening edn., p. 1; also Large, p. 135.

⁶¹ Saorín, p. 376; Walter, p. 151; Hecht, pp. 179-183; Maurer, *Ostjuden*, pp. 339-341; and Large, pp. 136-137.

⁶² *C.V.-Zeitung*, 23 November 1923, pp. 345-349 (<http://www.compactmemory.de>, accessed 30 May 2014). On the *C.V.-Zeitung*, see Reiner Bernstein, ‘Zwischen Emanzipation und Antisemitismus: Die Publizistik der deutschen Juden am Beispiel der “C.V.-Zeitung”, Organ des Centralvereins deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens, 1924-1933’, unpublished PhD thesis, Free University Berlin 1969.

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Der Herausgeber erstrebt für das jüdische Volk die Schaffung einer öffentlich-rechtlich gesicherten Heimstätte in Palästina. „Wärscher Programm.“

Die Schicksalsstunde des deutschen Judentums

In den Straßen Berlins hat ein Judenpogrom stattgefunden. Berlin war der Schauplatz trauriger und beschämender Ereignisse, wie sie bisher nur das Merkmal minderentwickelter Staaten gewesen sind. Die Früchte der Saat, die durch fünf Jahre systematisch ausgestreut worden ist, sind gereift. Der Antisemitismus, der in ganz Deutschland wie eine Pest um sich gegriffen hat, hat, nachdem er in der letzten Zeit vor allem in Bayern zur offiziellen Regierungsmaxime geworden ist, nun auch in Berlin seine Opfer gefordert.

Die Judenfrage ist in Deutschland akut geworden. Die von Haß verzerrten Gesichter, die auf das Judenessen stieren, die ungetrübte Feindschaft der Judenfeindschaft, die Zustimmung weitester Kreise der Bevölkerung zu den erbärmlichsten Schandtaten gegen Juden zeigt uns, daß die Juden heute fast vogelfrei geworden sind.

Das Gewissen der zivilisierten Welt ist abgestumpft. Im Herzen Europas, im deutschen Kulturstaat, haben wir erlebt, was noch vor zehn Jahren niemand für möglich gehalten hätte. Die deutschen Juden, die mit der Überlegenheit des auf sicherem Post Standehenden von den Juden-Programmen in Rußland gehört haben, hätten nie geglaubt, daß ihnen selbst ähnliche Erfahrungen bevorstehen. Die furchtbare Krise, in die der Krieg die ganze Welt und vor allem Deutschland gerissen hat, hat nun auch diese Folge gehabt.

Verstehen die deutschen Juden, was heute vor sich geht? Die Schicksalsstunde des deutschen Judentums ist gekommen. Die Juden sind in Deutschland ihres Leibes und Lebens nicht sicher; die Gleichberechtigung, die stets als das Fundament der jüdischen Existenz gepriesen wurde, ist erschüttert, die Möglichkeit einer Ausnahmegesetzgebung - noch vor wenigen Jahren völlig undenkbar und unvorstellbar - erscheint am Horizont. Die Früchte der Juden-Emanzipation sind ins Wanken geraten. Die Politik der Assimilation, die Politik der systematischen Preisgabe und Zersetzung des Judentums, hat Schiffbruch gelitten. Das deutsche Judentum steht heute vor der Tatsache, daß seine Politik des letzten Jahrhunderts völlig bankrottiert hat.

In dieser ersten Stunde wollen wir es unterlassen, darauf hinzuweisen, wie sehr wir Zionisten recht behalten haben, wenn wir die großen Zusammenhänge der Judenfrage aufzeigten. In diesem Augenblick geht es nicht darum, wer Recht behalten hat, sondern darum, was heute geschehen soll.

Das deutsche Judentum muß heute verstehen, daß nur wir Juden selbst uns helfen können. Werden wir uns nicht helfen, wird niemand uns helfen. Werden wir nicht für uns eintreten, wird niemand für uns eintreten.

Das deutsche Judentum muß heute solidarisch und entschlossen auf den Plan treten. Es gilt nicht nur der Schutz von Leib und Leben, es gilt auch die Wahrung unserer Ehre. Das deutsche Judentum muß die Welt heute vor die eindrucksvolle Tatsache stellen, daß es ein lebendiger, selbstbewußter Faktor ist, der seine Rechte und Interessen wahr. Der Ruf „Tod den Juden“ gilt allen. Der Haß gilt allen. Der gemeinsame Feind - wenn schon nicht mehr - schießt uns zusammen. Für jeden Juden, dem heute in Deutschland um seines Judentums willen ein Haar gekrümmt wird, muß das gesamte Judentum solidarisch eintreten.

Wir Zionisten sind uns des Ernstes der Stunde bewußt. Wir wollen, ungeachtet aller Gegensätze der Weltanschauung und der Partei, das Trennende zurückstellen, wenn die deutschen Juden bereit sind, mit uns zusammen das deutsche Judentum als kraftvollen Organismus wieder aufzubauen.

Die Einheitsfront aller Juden in Deutschland ist das Gebot dieser Stunde. Werden die deutschen Juden dies verstehen? Wir warten mit Bangen der nächsten Tage, die die Entscheidung bringen. Denn schwerer noch als die Schläge von außen würde es uns treffen, wenn wir einsehen müßten, daß das deutsche Judentum in diesen Tagen nicht seine Kraft und Würde wiedergefunden hat.

Die judenfeindlichen Ausschreitungen in Berlin

Am Montag und Dienstag kam es im Zentrum Berlins zu Ausschreitungen, die bald den Charakter von Pogromen annahm. Die Berliner Tagespresse bringt über diese Vorfälle die folgenden Berichte:

Die Vergewaltigung am Montag
Am Vormittag gegen 11 Uhr stauten sich vor dem Arbeitsamt in der Alexanderstraße Zehntausende von Erwerbslosen, weil es heißt, daß das Amt Arbeitsmittelposten ausgeben würde. Eine halbe Stunde später wurde jedoch mitgeteilt, daß kein Geld vorhanden sei. Der Menge benutzte sich zur großen Erregung und dieses Augenblick benutzten, wie tausendmal festgesetzt worden ist, gewerbelustige Agitatoren, um überall herumzuziehen, daß die in der Nähe, Dragorstraße 10, am 1. November 1923, das von der Stadt besonders zur Erwerbslosenfrage herausgegebene wertvolle Mitteilungsblatt „Mittelstand“ hätte. Diese Hetzreden fanden Boden, und wenige Minuten später, etwa gegen fünf Uhr mittags, begannen denn auch die Plünderungen jüdischer Geschäfte und Wohnungen. Ehe die erschrockenen Bewohner dieser Gegend ihre Geschäfte schließen konnten, drangen Horden jüdischer Jugendlichen in die Läden und Zimmer ein, prügelten die Bewohner, zogen ihnen die Kleider von Leib und Füßen. Dieses Treiben wurde systematisch etwa eine Stunde von Haus zu Haus fortgesetzt, ehe die Schutzpolizei alarmiert war. Jeder auf der Straße gefasste jüdische Mensch wurde von einer schreienden Menge betreten, zu Boden geschlagen und seiner Kleider beraubt. Ein besonders krasser Fall spielte sich in der Müntzstraße ab, wo man einen jüdischen Juden verlor, bis ihn ein Hund knagte und halb tot schleppte. Er wurde schließlich in Schicksal genommen und nach Polizeipräsidium transportiert. Hinreichend war auf Lustlosigkeiten bedingte Verbindungen der Schutzpolizei eingeworfen, die besonders geladene Teile der Grenadier-, Linien- und Dragorstrasse absperrten.

Gegen 2 Uhr wurde eine Anzahl von Personen im Scheinwerferfeld von der Menge schwer mißhandelt. Dabei fiel ein Schuß. Einer der Beteiligten, Dr. H. B., der seine ärztliche Praxis in der hiesigen Gegend ausübt, teil der „Vossischen Zeitung“ über seine Erlebnisse mit:

„Wer das Schuß abgegeben hat, weiß ich nicht. Jedenfalls war es das Signal für die Menge, erneut über mich herzufallen. Wir wußten aus, so gut es ging. Ein Automobil mit einem Major und zwei Schupo-Leuten erschien. Der Major sah mich im selben Augenblick zurück. Der Major gab aber sofort das Zeichen, weiter zu fahren, obwohl es den Deutschen mit unserer Unterstützung, zu der ich mich erbot, ein leichtes gewesen wäre, Ordnung zu schaffen. Das Auto trug die Nummer 1A 068. Daraus befragte die Menge uns verächtlich, bis ein größeres Auto mit Schupo-Angehörigen ersuchte. Die Schupo-Angehörigen schritten unter dauerndem Mißhandlungen schwerer Art zu unserer Verhaftung. In der Kaserne in der Alexanderstraße auf dem Hofe mußten wir nunmehr von ungefähr 200 Schupo-Leuten mit erhellenden Fackeln umgeben stehen und wurden wiederum schwer mißhandelt. Mir selbst ist der Mittelhandknochen der rechten Hand zerbrochen worden. Ich habe vier Jahre an der Front als Arzt mitgemacht, bin Schererverwundeter, bin im Besitz des Eisernen Kreuzes II. und I. Klasse und des Sächsischen Ritterkreuzes. Die Zyniker machten auf mich nicht den Eindruck, als ich mich in einem Rechtsstaat befände.“
* Oberst Kaupisch erklärte auf die Anfrage der „Vossischen Zeitung“, wie er das Verhalten der Schutzpolizei während der Plünderungen und Kränkeln in Schererverwundung beurteilt, daß er eine antisemitische Einstellung der Schutzpolizei sowohl bei den Mannschaften wie im Offizierskorps für vollkommen ausgeschlossen hält. Das Vorgehen der Beamten im Scheinwerferfeld sei durch die Eigenart der Verhältnisse nur zu verantworten, da es sich zumeist um Erwerbslose handelte, die über die Nachtzeit, die kein Geld für sie vorhanden sei, aus der anberaumten erwarteten. Oberst Kaupisch hat gegenwärtig einen strengeren Tagesbefehl an die Beamten herausgegeben lassen, in dem er sie auffordert, das Gut und Leben jedes bedürftigen Bürgers, gleichgültig welcher Konfession, unbedingt mit dem Maximum zu schützen. Da die Plünderungen in den verschiedenen Stadtteilen auch am gestrigen Nachmittag der zu als abgeklungen, hat der Kommandeur außerdem den höchsten Grad der Alarmsbereitschaft für die Groß-Berliner Schutzpolizei angeordnet.

Den von der „Vossischen Zeitung“ erhaltenen Fall der Arztes Dr. B. wird Oberst Kaupisch sofort auf strengste untersuchen lassen. Der Kommandeur besuchte noch einmal zum Schluß, daß er jede Garantie dafür übernehme, daß die Berliner Schutzpolizei von antisemitischen Säuungen frei sei.

Montag nachts
Die Unruhen, die am Morgen in Scheinwerferfeld begannen, und die, getrieben von druckschwachen Hetzern, gegen Abend ihren Höhepunkt erreichten, sind während der Nacht leider nicht abgeklungen, sondern haben sich auch auf andere Stadtteile übertragen. Es liegen am Vormittag bei den zehntausend Stück untergeordnet viele Meldungen über Plünderungen, Diebstähle und Bedrohungen von Bürgern auch nichtjüdischer Abkunft vor. Die Agitation auf den Straßen, die getrieben wurde sowohl von deutsch-wärscher als auch von jüdischen kommunistischer Seite betrieben wurde, hat sich in den heutigen Familienkreisen noch verstärkt. Sie geht unter der Parole „Schlagt die Juden tot“ vor. Am allen Teilen der Stadt liegen die Aufschreienden Meldungen vor, die besagen, daß die Hetzer von rechts und links versuchen, die Plünderungen, die aus ganz anderen Motiven entstanden sind, in das politische Fahrwasser zu lenken.

Jüdische Rundschau, 9 November 1923, p. 557. Source: Compact Memory/ Internetarchiv jüdischer Periodika, <http://www.compactmemory.de> (accessed 30 May 2014); Universitätsbibliothek Frankfurt am Main / Digitale Sammlungen Judaica, <http://sammlungen.ub.uni-frankfurt.de/cm/periodical/pageview/2674636> (accessed 16 June 2014). Reproduced with permission of Universitätsbibliothek Frankfurt am Main, Hebraica- und Judaica-Sammlung.

Jews were no longer safe in Germany. In the Rundschau's view, the pogrom was not only directed at the Ostjuden but also against all Jews living in Germany. Still worse, the pogrom demonstrated that the civilized world had become dulled and disinterested in the Jewish fate.⁶³

Die Schicksalsstunde des deutschen Judentums

In den Straßen Berlins hat ein Judenpogrom stattgefunden.

Berlin war der Schauplatz trauriger und beschämender Ereignisse, wie sie bisher nur das Merkmal minderkultivierter Staaten gewesen sind. Die Früchte der Saat, die durch fünf Jahre systematisch ausgestreut worden ist, sind gereift. Der Antisemitismus, der in ganz Deutschland wie eine Pest um sich gegriffen hat, hat, nachdem er in der letzten Zeit vor allem in Bayern zur offiziellen Regierungsmaxime geworden ist, nun auch in Berlin seine Opfer gefordert.

Die Judenfrage ist in Deutschland akut geworden. [...] Die Zustimmung weitester Kreise der Bevölkerung zu den er barmherzigsten Schandtaten gegen Juden zeigt uns, daß die Juden heute fast vogelfrei geworden sind.

Das Gewissen der zivilisierten Welt ist abgestumpft. Im Herzen Europas, im deutschen Kulturstaat, haben wir erlebt, was noch vor zehn Jahren niemand für möglich gehalten hatte. Die deutschen Juden, die mit der Ueberlegenheit [sic] des auf sicherem Posten Stehenden von den Juden-Pogromen in Rußland gehort haben, hatten nie geglaubt, daß ihnen selbst ähnliche Erfahrungen bevorstehen. [...]

Verstehen die deutschen Juden, was heute vor sich geht? Die Schicksalsstunde des deutschen Judentums ist gekommen. Die Juden sind in Deutschland ihres Leibes und ihres Lebens nicht sicher; die Gleichberechtigung, die stets als das Fundament der jüdischen Existenz gepriesen wurde, ist erschüttert [...]. Die Früchte der Juden-Emanzipation sind ins Wanken geraten.⁶⁴

The majority of the Jewish press did not however support this pessimistic view, but avowed themselves to the principles of assimilation and identification with the German nation.⁶⁵

In contrast, reactionary and volkisch newspapers openly showed sympathy for the rioters.⁶⁶ The Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger argued that the "unwelcome immigrants" bore the responsibility for the excesses; the "Galicians" had been involved in "dirty currency dealings" and other "dark business" and hence provoked the rioting.⁶⁷ On 10 November the weekly Der Reichswart, edited by Ernst Graf zu Reventlow, a Reichstag deputy of the Deutschvolkische Freiheitspartei (DVFP) and later of the NSDAP,⁶⁸ published a front-page article entitled "Kulturschande" turning upside

⁶³ Judische Rundschau, 9 November 1923, p. 557 (<http://www.compactmemory.de>, accessed 30 May 2014).

See also Maurer, Ostjuden, p. 341; Large, p. 137. On the Judische Rundschau: Michael Nagel, 'Judische Rundschau', in Diner, vol. III, pp. 253-255.

⁶⁴ Judische Rundschau, 9 November 1923, p. 557 (<http://www.compactmemory.de>, accessed 30 May 2014).

⁶⁵ Maurer, Ostjuden, pp. 342-344; Large, pp. 137-138. The Judische Rundschau was heavily criticized for its radical position. See the reply to its critics in 'Die judenfeindliche Welle', Judische Rundschau, 20 November 1923, pp. 501-502.

⁶⁶ Zilkenat, 'Pogrom', p. 101; Wegehaupt, p. 300; Large, pp. 124-25, 135-136.

⁶⁷ Asmuss, pp. 490-93.

⁶⁸ Stefanie Schrader, 'Der Reichswart (1920-1944)', in Wolfgang Benz (ed), Handbuch des Antisemitismus, vol. VI: Publikationen, Berlin/Boston 2013, pp. 592-593.

down the argument of the liberal, socialist, and Jewish press that the riots were a disgrace to Berlin, and indeed to Germany. The real “Kulturschande”, or “cultural disgrace”, the Reichswart insisted, was the fact that Germany continued to be dominated by “the Jew” who controlled the economy, the financial sector, and German politics at the expense of the German people:

In der Gegend des Berliner Alexanderplatzes, wo sich seit Jahren ein reichbelebtes und lebhaft und lukrativ mit allem handelndes freies Ghetto gebildet hat, hat sich in der vorigen Woche eine Begebenheit ereignet, die die Judenpresse als “Kulturschande” ausruft, auch erklärt, man könne sich hiernach nicht mehr als in einem Rechtsstaate beendlich vorkommen. [...] In Wirklichkeit liegt die Kulturschande ganz woanders. Eine Kulturschande, eine Schandung der deutschen Kultur und eine Schande für die Deutschen in ihrer Pflichteigenschaft als Träger und Hüter der deutschen Kultur ist, da□ sie bis heute die jüdische Beherrschung und Vergiftung sich haben gefallen lassen.⁶⁹

In evaluating the historical significance of the riots, it should be remembered that in the autumn of 1923 antisemitic excesses were not confined to the Scheunenviertel, but that food riots, frequently accompanied by attacks on Jews, occurred in several German cities and towns (for example, Karlsruhe, Nurnberg, Coburg, Erfurt, Breslau, and Bremen).⁷⁰ Still, the excesses in the Scheunenviertel differed fundamentally in terms of scope, violence, and the victims. First, contrary to other food riots, the Scheunenviertel riots were explicitly directed against an identifiable minority, that is, the Ostjuden. Moreover, the rioters not only plundered bakeries and shops to get hold of desperately needed food, they also entered and devastated private dwellings inhabited by Jews and made a concerted attack on Jews and Jewish-looking persons on the streets.⁷¹ Second, as most contemporary newspapers emphasized, the riots were not a spontaneous outburst of violence in reaction to the drastic increase in food prices, but obviously planned by nationalist agitators who co-ordinated the rioters from outside the Scheunenviertel.⁷² Third, the pogrom-like excesses at the height of the German economic and political crisis reveal the extent to which large sections of the German public, including the unemployed working classes who were traditionally voters of the left-wing parties, had become vulnerable to antisemitic propaganda and were disposed to blame the Jews indiscriminately for their misery.⁷³ Finally, the reaction of the Berlin police pointed to a problem in the way that the German authorities reacted to antisemitic violence. Although the police force did ultimately pacify the

⁶⁹ ‘Kulturschande’, in Der Reichswart, 10 November 1923, p. 1 (emphasis in original; <http://zefys.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/list/title/zdb/25546545/>, accessed 30 May 2014).

⁷⁰ Large, p. 138; Walter, p. 151; Maurer, Ostjuden, pp. 329, 334-335; and Hecht, pp. 168-177.

⁷¹ Zilkenat, ‘Pogrom’, p. 101; Maurer, Ostjuden, pp. 335-336.

⁷² Zilkenat, ‘Pogrom’, p. 101. Walter (p. 152) questions that the riots were the result of nationalist agitation. He argues that this claim merely served the political parties and the Berlin city administration, enabling them to wash their hands of responsibility and to distract public attention away from the fact that a large Berlin populace had participated in a serious antisemitic incident. Large (pp. 125, 128, 130) likewise rejects the idea that the riots were the work of right-wing agitators and systematically planned by them. To him the riots were a spontaneous occurrence.

⁷³ Large, p. 139. On antisemitic propaganda, see Maurer, Ostjuden, pp. 337-339.

Scheunenviertel, there can be no doubt that it did not respond quickly enough. Hence, contemporary observers accused the Berlin police of being infected with latent antisemitism.⁷⁴

THE DISCOURSES ON THE SCHEUNENVIERTEL RIOTS IN THE FOREIGN PRESS

The riots were widely discussed in the press across Europe and the United States, though there were distinct differences in the tone and substance of the accounts, the dividing line running roughly between conservative and Catholic on the one side, and liberal and left-wing papers on the other. In general, it appears that conservative and Catholic papers ignored or downplayed the antisemitic character of the excesses; some even appeared prejudiced against eastern Jews. In contrast, liberal and left-wing papers generally condemned the anti-Jewish excesses and nature of the riots and were outspoken in their condemnation. Moreover, we can also discern differences in the various national press outlets. Thus, French papers published shorter accounts, acknowledging the antisemitic character of the riots but ignoring their deeper implications. In Italy and Austria in particular, liberal and left-wing papers discussed seriously and in depth the rioting, whereas the more conservative and Catholic papers paid much less attention to the incident. The British and American press generally reported fully on the occurrence, but several conservative papers displayed an anti-Jewish bias.

Thus, the conservative London Times emphasized that the excesses seemed to have been well prepared by nationalist agitators, but the description of the event also reveals a prejudice against eastern Jews. The Times called the Scheunenviertel “unsavoury” and compared it with the Jewish area in London’s East End. Moreover, it charged that the Jewish inhabitants were illegally dealing in dollars, thus evoking the impression that it was in part the Jews’ own fault that they had been attacked.⁷⁵ In line with this article were two photographs published two days later. One displayed a large crowd outside a house where a group of Jews had apparently sought shelter. No police forces are seen; apparently the passers-by were watching the scene out of curiosity without intervening on behalf of the hunted. The second photograph showed policemen guarding damaged premises. The store, however, did not belong to Jews, as is testified by the notice “Christian business”. The photograph evokes the impression that the police did not come to protect the Jews from plundering and bodily injury, but was instead helping non-Jewish business people.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ ‘Plunderungen in Berlin’, in *Neue Freie Presse*, 6 November 1923, pp. 4-5; ‘The Rebel Plan in Germany’, in *Manchester Guardian*, 8 November 1923, p. 9; Large, pp. 139-140; Maurer, pp. 330, 335, 347-354.

⁷⁵ ‘German Appeals for Unity’, in *The Times*, 7 November 1923, p. 14.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, in 9 November 1923, p. 16; Seul, ‘A Mad Spirit’, pp. 518-519; Seul, ‘A Menace to Jews’, p. 90.



TheTimes, 9 November 1923, p. 16. Reproduced with permission of Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Bremen.

The coverage of the conservative Scotsman⁷⁷ likewise implied that the Jews were profiteers dealing illegally in foreign currencies.⁷⁸ Equally, the conservative (Republican) Chicago Daily Tribune put the blame for the riots on the eastern Jews

⁷⁷For a historical overview, see 'The Birth of a Tenpenny Thunderclap' (<http://archive.scotsman.com/help/about>, accessed 13 February 2014).

⁷⁸'Berlin Shops Plundered', in The Scotsman, 6 November 1923, p. 8; Seul, 'British Press Coverage', p. 201.

themselves with their alleged distasteful behaviour. It argued that the rioters ‘a mob of unemployed or poorly paid workers angered by the increases in bread and food prices’ ‘went into this quarter, peopled by speculators, small merchants and exchange brokers, to get revenge’. ‘German Jews’, the paper asserted, ‘were protected and untouched, and only the Poles were attacked’.⁷⁹

The Italian *Osservatore Romano* the official Vatican paper with an openly anti-Jewish perspective⁸⁰ only mentioned very briefly that rioting and plundering had broken out in Berlin following a drastic rise in food prices, and that it was assumed that the agitation had an antisemitic character.⁸¹ Likewise, the French conservative press generally acknowledged that the riots had an antisemitic complexion. The accounts were written in neutral language and showed strikingly similar wording – apparently they were based on reports of the Agence Havas or other news agencies and only minimally subjected to editing.⁸² Several papers created the impression that the riots were also a reaction of the angry populace to the eastern Jews’ illegal dealings in foreign currency. Thus, *Le Temps*, *Le Figaro*, and *L’Action française* wrote in identical words: ‘Un israelite de Galicie, qui se livrait au trafic des devises en pleine rue, a ete attaque par la foule qui lui arracha ses habits, ne lui laissant que ses chaussettes’.⁸³ The nationalist, anti-republican and antisemitic paper *L’Action française*⁸⁴ mentioned that cries of ‘A bas les Juifs! Mort aux Juifs! Cassez la tete aux Juifs!’ could be heard and that ‘un certain nombre de passants, au type israelite trop accentue, ont ete malmenes et meme serieusement blesses’.⁸⁵ *L’Ouest-Eclair*, a provincial paper from the Rennes region leaning towards social Catholicism,⁸⁶ wrote: ‘Le caractere antisemite pris par les emeutes et les pillages des magasins de Berlin vient de ce que la foule attribue aux financiers, dont un grand nombre sont israelites, la cherte de la vie et le marasme economique dans lequel on se debat’.⁸⁷

⁷⁹ ‘Storm Berlin Bourse’, in *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 6 November 1923, p. 1; Seul, ‘A Menace to Jews’, pp. 90-91. On the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, the leading paper of Chicago and the Midwest, see *Web Presse* (1931), pp. 20, 25-26; Muller, pp. 48-49; ‘Chicago Tribune’, in *Encyclopedia Britannica Academic Edition* <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/110559/Chicago-Tribune> (accessed 20 February 2012).

⁸⁰ David L. Dahl, ‘L’Osservatore Romano (Italien, seit 1861)’ in Benz, *Handbuch*, vol. VI, pp. 517-518; Francesco Leoni, *L’Osservatore Romano. Origini ed evoluzione*, Napoli 1970.

⁸¹ ‘Tumulti e saccheggi a Berlino per il caro-vita’, in *Osservatore Romano*, 8 November 1923, p. 1.

⁸² See the coverage between 6 and 8 November 1923 in *Le Temps*, *Le Figaro*, *Le Matin*, *Le Journal des Debats*, *La Croix*, and *L’Action française*.

⁸³ ‘Desordres et pillages a Berlin’, in *Le Temps*, 7 November 1923, p. 2. This article was based on an Agence Havas telegram and appeared in almost identical terms under the title ‘Graves bagarres a Berlin’, in *Le Figaro*, 6 November 1923, p. 1. On the history and political orientation of the two papers, see homepage BnF, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/html/presse-et-revues/les-principaux-quotidiens>; Christophe Charle, *Le siecle de la presse, 1830-1939*, Paris 2004; Claire Blandin, *Le Figaro. Deux siecles d’histoire*, Paris 2007.

⁸⁴ Homepage BnF, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/html/presse-et-revues/les-principaux-quotidiens>; Dominique Trimbur, ‘L’Action française (Frankreich, 1899-1944)’, in Benz, *Handbuch*, vol. VI, pp. 1-3.

⁸⁵ ‘Le prix du pain passe de 23 a 140 milliards’, in *L’Action française*, 6 November 1923, p. 3.

⁸⁶ Homepage BnF, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/html/presse-et-revues/les-principaux-quotidiens>; Charle.

⁸⁷ ‘Pussee d’antisemitisme a Berlin’, in *L’Ouest-Eclair*, 7 November 1923, p. 1.

In Austria, the *Wiener Zeitung*, a conservative official government paper,⁸⁸ spoke simply of “Ausschreitungen”⁸⁹ (excesses) and “Unruhen”⁹⁰ (disturbances) without hinting at their antisemitic natures. Both articles were based on reports from the Wolfsches Telegraphenburo and neither mentioned that the principal victims of the riots were Jews. Instead, the *Wiener Zeitung* argued that the riots were primarily directed against “Devisenschieber und Aufkäufer von Schatzanweisungen”,⁹¹ that is, illegal dealers in foreign currency and treasury bonds, thereby making use of typical antisemitic stereotypes.⁹² The *Reichspost*, a Catholic paper politically close to the Christlichsoziale Partei (Christian Social Party) with a reactionary and antisemitic tendency,⁹³ likewise spoke of “Ausschreitungen”, “Unruhen”, and “Plunderungen”, that is, excesses, disturbances, and pillaging. However, it also hinted at their antisemitic nature and stated that they were a result of propaganda conducted by professional agitators among the unemployed during the previous days.⁹⁴ The *Neuigkeits-Welt-Blatt*, a local Viennese paper holding to Catholic principles and increasingly supportive of Austro-fascism,⁹⁵ differed significantly from the previously cited foreign conservative newspapers for its pronounced anti-Jewish ideas. On 7 November it flatly denied any causal connection between antisemitic propaganda and the riots:

Selbstverständlich sind solche Vorfälle nicht auf “die Agitation nationalsozialistischer Hetzer” zurückzuführen ^ wie manche Berliner Morgenblätter meinen ^ sondern sie entspringen der Stimmung des Volkes, das eben sieht, wie überall das judische Element sich im allgemeinen Zusammenbruch obenauf zu halten, ja aus ihm Nutzen zu ziehen weiß. ⁹⁶

In contrast, liberal or left-wing papers published more critical accounts; some also sought to investigate the social and political implications of the riots. The liberal (independent Democratic) *New York Times* printed several telegraphic reports that closely followed the argumentation of the German liberal and Social Democratic press, namely that the riots had not been a spontaneous response to the upsurge in food prices, but the result of systematic antisemitic agitation by the nationalists. Thus, on 6 November the paper emphasized that “for the first time a pogrom spirit manifested itself in the brutal treatment of Jews and others who looked like Jews”.⁹⁷

⁸⁸ Kurt Paupie, *Handbuch der österreichischen Pressegeschichte 1848-1959*, vol. I: Wien, Wien/Stuttgart 1960, pp. 119-120.

⁸⁹ ‘Ausschreitungen in Berlin’, in *Wiener Zeitung*, 6 November 1923, p. 2.

⁹⁰ ‘Unruhen in Berlin’, in *Wiener Zeitung*, 7 November 1923, p. 3.

⁹¹ ‘Ausschreitungen in Berlin’, in *Wiener Zeitung*, 6 November 1923, p. 2.

⁹² See also note 48 above.

⁹³ Paupie, pp. 97-101; Christian Pape, ‘*Reichspost (Österreich, 1894-1938)*’, in Benz, *Handbuch*, vol. VI, pp. 590-591.

⁹⁴ ‘1 Laib Brot ^ 140 Milliarden’, in *Reichspost*, 6 November 1923, p. 3; ‘Die Plunderungen in Berlin’, in *ibid.*, 7 November 1923, p. 2.

⁹⁵ Paupie, pp. 102-103.

⁹⁶ ‘Unruhen und Plunderungen in Berlin’, in *Neuigkeits-Welt-Blatt*, 7 November 1923, p. 1 (emphasis in original).

⁹⁷ ‘Berlin Food Rioters Attack and Beat Jews’, in *New York Times*, 6 November 1923, p. 2.

A day later, a newstelegram from the Associated Press gave a detailed account of the brutal treatment of the Jews: “Numerous assaults upon Jews were committed in the ghetto districts by gangs of young ruffians. One of their methods was to seize bearded native Galicians, clip off sections of their Oriental beards in patches and then permit their victims with the resulting grotesque hirsute adornments to pass on”.⁹⁸ A report from the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, citing the *Vossische Zeitung* to the effect that Jews had been maltreated by the police, stated:

The disorders yesterday marked the culmination of the agitation carried on against the Jews by the German nationalists. A mob of 30,000 invaded the Jewish sections of the city and no Jew was safe on the streets. [...] The newspapers this morning ascribe the responsibility for the rioting to the determined propaganda carried on for months among the unemployed. The *Tageblatt* and the *Lokal Anzeiger* remark it is significant that the attack was not sporadic, but broke out simultaneously in the principal Jewish sections.⁹⁹

The renowned American paper *Christian Science Monitor* likewise stressed that the plundering was “apparently thoroughly organized”,¹⁰⁰ and that “For the first time in Berlin, [...] attacks were made on the Jewish population yesterday”.¹⁰¹

In Great Britain, the *Manchester Guardian* published the fullest accounts. As we have seen earlier, the paper emphasized that the riots appeared to be carefully pre-arranged by the German nationalists and that the German conservative and reactionary press had, by way of antisemitic propaganda, prepared the atmosphere for an onslaught on the Jews.¹⁰² In this the *Manchester Guardian* was following closely the argumentation of the *Vossische Zeitung*. Moreover, it argued that there clearly seemed to exist antisemitic feelings amongst the police as they had utterly failed to protect the Jews.¹⁰³

In Italy, the renowned anti-Fascist paper *La Stampa* argued on 6 November that the angry populace held the eastern Jews responsible for the increase in food prices and that the riots resembled a pogrom: “Questa agitazione ha assunto specialmente un carattere antisemita, che in qualche strada della città fu così violento da presentare l’aspetto di un pogrom”.¹⁰⁴ A day later *La Stampa* underlined the responsibility of the German right for the riots: “La gravità dei disordini antisemiti di ieri è sottolineata dal malcelato entusiasmo con cui i giornali della

⁹⁸ ‘Berlin Rioting Resumed’, in *New York Times*, 7 November 1923, p. 5.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.* See also Seul, ‘A Menace to Jews’, pp. 91-92; Seul, ‘A Mad Spirit’, pp. 519-521.

¹⁰⁰ ‘Reich Nationalists Publish Decision to Take Control’, in *Christian Science Monitor*, 7 November 1923, p. 1.

¹⁰¹ ‘Berlin Foodshops are Stormed by Hungry Populace’, in *Christian Science Monitor*, 6 November 1923, p. 1. On the paper’s history, see Erwin D. Canham, *The Christian Science Monitor: To Injure No Man, But to Bless all Mankind . . .*, New York 1954.

¹⁰² ‘Anti-Jewish Riots in Berlin’, in *Manchester Guardian*, 7 November 1923, p. 9; ‘Stop-Press News’, in *ibid.*, 6 November 1923, p. 8. See also Seul, ‘A Menace to Jews’, p. 92; Seul, ‘British Press Coverage’, pp. 201-202; von Selchow, p. 56.

¹⁰³ ‘The Rebel Plan in Germany’, in *Manchester Guardian*, 8 November 1923, p. 9. See also von Selchow, p. 57.

¹⁰⁴ ‘Torbida giornata a Berlino’, in *La Stampa*, 6 November 1923, p. 1. On the paper’s history, see Valerio Castronovo, *La Stampa 1867-1925. Un’idea di democrazia liberale*, Milan 1987.

destra elencano gli episodi di violenza e danno degli Ebrei, e parlano di uno sfogo naturale di sentimenti lungamente repressi.” Quoting the Berliner Tageblatt the paper stated that “gli avvenimenti di ieri hanno messo nell’ombra persino certe scene della Russia degli Zar”.¹⁰⁵ Similarly, the most widely read Italian paper, the liberal-conservative Corriere della Sera,¹⁰⁶ showed concern about the antisemitic character of the riots, for which it held the reactionary propaganda responsible: “Alcuni agitatori tennero allora discorsi contro gli ebrei che accusarono fra l’altro dell’incetta della moneta stabile a corso inferiore al normale. [...] E stato questo il segnale dei saccheggi in tutto il quartiere”.¹⁰⁷ The Corriere della Sera moreover underlined that the police had not sufficiently protected the Jews.¹⁰⁸ In line with the Vorwarts, the socialist paper La Giustizia interpreted the riots as an attempt on the part of the reactionaries to stage a coup d’etat:

Gli elementi berlinesi di estrema destra, per favorire i piani di quelli che preparano il colpo di stato, hanno organizzato ieri nella capitale delle dimostrazioni popolari antisemite che hanno condotto a gravi atti di saccheggio e a tentativi di pogrom. [...] I negozianti israeliti (accusati dai capi nazionalisti di essere principali autori del rincaro) si difesero alla meglio, ma molti di essi furono malmenati ed anche gravemente feriti.¹⁰⁹

The French communist paper L’Humanite likewise held that the excesses were in no way hunger riots, but represented a systematic attack on the Jews “organisee et dirigee par des agents provocateurs fascistes et nationalistes”. “Berlin”, the paper concluded, “a vecu hier et aujourd’hui les premiers pogroms juifs en Allemagne”.¹¹⁰ The most popular paper of the Third Republic, the politically moderate and republican Le Petit Parisien,¹¹¹ argued along similar lines. In nine out of ten cases, it wrote, the shops plundered had been Jewish and the raiders seemed to have proceeded according to plan: “Les pillards procedent suivant un plan etabli: des que la police paraît, ils se dispersent pour se reformer ailleurs et continuer leurs mefaits”.¹¹²

In Austria, the liberal Viennese paper Neue Freie Presse,¹¹³ calling the riots “einen regelrechten Pogrom”,¹¹⁴ highlighted the grave political implications of the

¹⁰⁵ ‘In Germania si ritiene ingiusticata [. . .]’, in La Stampa, 7 November, p. 5. The original quotation from the BerlinerTageblatt is in Maurer, Ostjuden, p. 337.

¹⁰⁶ Ernesto Galli Della Loggia, Storia del “Corriere della Sera”, Milan 2011; Glauco Licata, Storia del Corriere della Sera, Milan, 1976.

¹⁰⁷ ‘Reichswehr e nazionalisti tedeschi si fronteggiano’, in Corriere della Sera, 6 November 1923, p. 6.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ ‘La crisi politica e sociale tedesca’, in La Giustizia, 7 November 1923, p. 1 (emphasis in original). On the paper’s history, see “‘La Giustizia’”. scheda di approfondimento’, <http://digilib.netribe.it/bdr01/Sezione.jsp?idSezione=70> (accessed 13 February 2014); Nicola Tranfaglia, Paolo Murialdi, and Massimo Legnani, La stampa italiana nell’eta fascista, Rome/Bari 1980.

¹¹⁰ ‘Le Chancelier de la Grande coalition’, in L’Humanite, 7 November 1923, p. 1.

¹¹¹ Homepage BnF, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/html/presse-et-revues/les-principaux-quotidiens>; Micheline Dupuy, Le Petit Parisien. Le plus fort tirage des journaux du monde entier, Paris 1989.

¹¹² ‘Les pillages continuent a Berlin’, in Le Petit Parisien, 7 November 1923, p. 1. See also ‘Le danger reactionnaire ne cesse de croître a Berlin’, in ibid., 6 November 1923, p. 3.

¹¹³ Bela Rasky, ‘Neue Freie Presse (Osterreich, 1864-1939)’, in Benz, Handbuch, vol. VI, pp. 488-490; Paupie, pp. 144-150.

¹¹⁴ ‘Der heutige Tag in Berlin’, in Neue Freie Presse, 7 November 1923, p. 1.

incident. The paper's Berlin correspondent linked the riots to the reactionary and counter-revolutionary movements that were gathering at the border between Bavaria and Thuringia and in various parts of northern Germany.¹¹⁵ Moreover, he sharply condemned the behaviour of the Berlin police who seemed openly biased against Jews: "Großes Befremden hat es auch erregt, daß die Polizei Mißhandelte mit jüdischem Aussehen nicht etwa beschützte, sondern von der Menge halb tot schlagen ließ [...]. Hier scheinen gewisse dunkle Mächte im Spiele zu sein".¹¹⁶

A remarkable article, not only for the depth of its analysis but also because it took on a decidedly Jewish perspective, was published on 7 November by the *Neues 8 Uhr Blatt*, a Viennese tabloid with a moderate left-of-centre political stance.¹¹⁷ The account was written by the paper's Berlin correspondent, Dr Georg Froschel, a Viennese lawyer, novelist, and screenplay writer then working as chief dramaturgist at the Universum-Film AG (UFA) in Berlin.¹¹⁸ Being a Jew himself, Froschel seems to have shown a personal interest in the incident and to have evaluated German-Jewish newspapers and been in contact with Jewish organizations. He visited the Scheunenviertel on the evening of 5 November and spoke to Jews whose shops and flats had been pillaged. Taking up the argumentation of the *Berliner Tageblatt*, Froschel placed the riots on a level with the anti-Jewish pogroms in Russia and Romania, arguing that since medieval times Germany had not witnessed anything of this kind. Like *The Times* he compared the Scheunenviertel with the Jewish quarter in London's East End ("Whitechapel an der Spree"). However, unlike the British paper he portrayed Berlin's Jewish quarter in rather positive terms: in his words, the Scheunenviertel was a "Zufallsghetto" (incidental ghetto) that was neither better nor worse than other working class districts in Berlin. Here, poor Jewish immigrants from Russia and Galicia were living alongside thieves, handlers of stolen goods, pimps, and dealers in foreign exchange. Froschel categorically rejected the allegation of German conservative and nationalist papers that the riots were an understandable response of the Berlin unemployed to the criminal elements in the Scheunenviertel. Instead, he argued that the district was chosen for pillaging because its inhabitants were too vulnerable to offer any resistance:

Nicht moralische Empörung ließ die wilden Massen durch die Grenadier- und Münzstraßen stürmen, der ausgehungerte, von Provokateuren geführte Mob stürzte sich

¹¹⁵ Presumably this was Dr Paul Goldmann (1865-1935), Berlin representative of the *Neue Freie Presse* from 1903 for more than 30 years. Of Jewish origins, he had studied law and worked as a journalist and writer. See entries for Paul Goldmann (b. 1865), in *Deutsches Biographisches Archiv* and *Jüdisches Biographisches Archiv/World Biographical Information System*, <http://db.saur.de/WBIS/welcome.jsf>.

¹¹⁶ 'Plunderungen in Berlin', in *Neue Freie Presse*, 6 November 1923, pp. 4-5 (quote on p. 5).

¹¹⁷ *Paupie*, pp. 101-102.

¹¹⁸ In 1936 Froschel emigrated to America, and was recipient of an Oscar in 1943. See the entry for Georg Froschel (1891-1966), in *Wer ist Wer* (1955)/*World Biographical Information System*, <http://db.saur.de/WBIS/welcome.jsf>; 'George Froschel', in *Wikipedia*, http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Froschel (accessed 17 February 2014).

in das Scheunenviertel, weil er dort den geringsten Widerstand fand, weil er dort plündern durfte, ohne ein großes, ja ohne überhaupt ein Risiko zu laufen.

[...] Wie immer, so hat auch diesmal das Unglück die Aermsten [sic] der Armen getroffen. [...] Der Mob wutete gegen armselige Handwerker, raubte jammerliche Trodlerladen aus, vernichtete die Existenz kleiner Geschäftsleute.¹¹⁹

Drawing on the arguments of the Jewish press, Froschel furthermore maintained that the pogrom had not come unexpectedly, but that Jewish organizations such as the Central-Verein or the Reichsbund jüdischer Frontsoldaten (Reich Federation of Jewish Front Soldiers) had repeatedly warned of the danger of a pogrom. At a recent meeting in Berlin the Prussian government had even reassured the Jewish representatives that the Berlin Schutzpolizei would do all in its power to suppress any indication or appearance of a pogrom. In Froschel's view, events belied these promises: The police did not only arrive too late but also watched the scene as Jews were being plundered and knocked down. In his judgment the police had acted disgracefully as a "Mordstatist", that is, a background actor to a murder.¹²⁰

Further research that lies outside the scope of this study is needed to explore how the press coverage of the riots was received by publics and governments around the globe. Yet there is reason to believe that the reporting negatively affected Germany's international standing. The press and the media have always played a central role in diplomatic affairs. Analysing the foreign press and assessing foreign public opinion is a core business of diplomats and foreign office officials. Likewise, diplomats and politicians have always sought to influence the press in order to attain a positive coverage of their policies.¹²¹ Here, in view of the critical foreign news coverage, officials of the German foreign office, deputies of the Reichstag, and representatives of the German and foreign press were concerned that the anti-Jewish excesses—not only the Scheunenviertel riots but also the expulsion of eastern Jews by the Bavarian authorities in the autumn of 1923—might have a negative effect on foreign public opinion. They feared that American public opinion might harden and induce President Calvin Coolidge to reconsider his plans for the badly needed American economic relief assistance to Germany.¹²²

As some press reports suggest, such apprehensions were not unjustified. To conclude this section, let me give two examples. Firstly, the *Jüdische Rundschau* warned that the Scheunenviertel riots and the reluctant intervention of the Berlin police were likely to destroy the sympathy of foreign publics and governments for Germany:

Abgesehen davon, dass bei Verfolgungen von ausländischen Juden die Interessen anderer Staaten direkt berührt werden (die Intervention der polnischen und österreichischen

¹¹⁹ 'Der Pogrom im Scheunenviertel', in *Neues 8 Uhr Blatt*, 7 November 1923, p. 2 (emphasis in original).

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ Bosch 'Medien', p. 522. See also Norman Domeier and Jorn Happel, 'Journalismus und Politik. Einleitende Überlegungen zur Tätigkeit von Auslandskorrespondenten 1900-1970', in *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, vol. 62, no. 5 (2014), pp. 389-397 (here pp. 389-394).

¹²² Pommerin, pp. 336-38. On the Bavarian expulsion of eastern Jews see also Maurer, *Ostjuden*, pp. 324-435; Walter, pp. 52-79.

Polenart verpricht Neutralität im Rheinland.

Warsa, 7. November. (Potsdam) Der polnische Botschafter in Brüssel hat am Montag dem belgischen Außenminister erklärt, dass Polen sich für die Neutralität im Rheinland entscheidet.



Der belgische Botschafter in Warschau.

Die Treibereien der Separatisten.

Warsa, 7. November. (HSH) Zu Separatisten treiben sich in Warschau die belgischen Treibereien der Separatisten, die sich für die Neutralität im Rheinland entscheiden.

Der Westflamen-Vertrag.

Die Westflamen sind nach der Erklärung der belgischen Regierung entschlossen, sich für die Neutralität im Rheinland zu entscheiden.

Der Pogrom im Gegendviertel.

(Was mehrere Anzeigenbelegungen)

Am 5. November 1923. Der Pogrom im Gegendviertel hat sich am Montag im Gegendviertel ereignet.

Das Berliner Wochens.

Das Wochens in Berlin hat sich am Montag im Gegendviertel ereignet.

Wichtigste der Woche.

Die wichtigsten Ereignisse der Woche sind die Pogrome im Gegendviertel.

Der Schillerplatz.

Der Schillerplatz in Berlin hat sich am Montag im Gegendviertel ereignet.

Die Polizei verhaftet.

Die Polizei hat am Montag im Gegendviertel mehrere Personen verhaftet.

Stimmen in Ungarn.

Stimmen in Ungarn über die Pogrome im Gegendviertel.



Wiener Chronik.

Umwanderung aus Deutschland nach Wien.

Die Umwanderung aus Deutschland nach Wien hat sich am Montag im Gegendviertel ereignet.

Die Demonstration der Berliner Schwerverbrecher.

Die Demonstration der Berliner Schwerverbrecher hat sich am Montag im Gegendviertel ereignet.

Das Verschwinden der Sofiane Ringer.

Das Verschwinden der Sofiane Ringer hat sich am Montag im Gegendviertel ereignet.

Regierung in Munchen legt davon Zeugnis ab), mu○□ bei allen Menschen aller Volker, die noch ein sittliches Gefuhl haben, der Abscheu uber derartige Untaten sich in politische Gesinnung umsetzen. Wenn also schon nicht die Menschlichkeit stark genug sein sollte, so mu○□te die Klugheit zu verhindern vermogen, da○□ Vorgange dieser Art sich in Deutschland wiederholen.¹²³

Secondly, the *New York Times* recounted that Emanuel Celler, Democratic representative for Brooklyn in Congress, and of Jewish faith,¹²⁴ doubted whether or not he should continue to advocate the urgently needed American relief for German children in view of reported outbursts of antisemitism in Germany:

I am told that mobs in Bavarian cities and in Berlin were pitilessly assaulting Jews and even Jewish-looking people. [...] As a Jew I must inveigh against those irresponsible and wretched Germans whose intolerance takes this form of violence and blood lust. Shall I nevertheless continue my efforts to have our Government contribute \$ 25,000,000 for bread and milk for over 2,000,000 children?¹²⁵

CONCLUSION

In the existing literature on foreign press perceptions of German antisemitism, the focus has been on the Third Reich and the Holocaust. This paper, in contrast, has revealed how German antisemitism was publicly debated abroad more than a decade before the National Socialists came to power and caused an outcry of indignation in the foreign press at their anti-Jewish policy. Focusing on the press discourses on the Scheunenviertel riots, this article has revealed visible differences in the reporting, with the dividing line running more along the political and ideological orientation of the papers than along their national affiliations. Despite the differences in the accounts, the press coverage revealed a number of common features.

First, foreign papers were generally well informed about antisemitic occurrences in the Weimar Republic, as is evidenced by the detailed accounts of the Scheunenviertel riots. An important source of information was the German press: German newspapers were thoroughly sifted and summaries and verbatim quotations reprinted. Consequently, the foreign press discourses on the riots were influenced by the sources the foreign journalists used. Although they evaluated German newspapers of all political shades, it seems that they quoted preferably from those German papers that corresponded with their own political outlooks. Thus, it is evident that foreign liberal and left-wing papers relied more heavily on the coverage of German liberal and socialist papers, e.g. the *Berliner Tageblatt*,

¹²³ 'Wie der Pogrom entstand', in *Judische Rundschau*, 9 November 1923, pp. 558-559.

¹²⁴ 'Cellar, Emanuel (1888-1981)', in *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, 1774 ^ Present*. See <http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=C000264> (accessed 10 February 2014).

¹²⁵ 'Cellar Asks Advice on German Relief', in *New York Times*, 3 December 1923.

Vossische Zeitung, and Vorwärts, and that in a sense they passed on to their audiences the German liberal or left-wing judgement on antisemitism. In contrast, conservative papers more often just retransmitted to their readers the anti-Jewish ideas contained in the German conservative and reactionary press. This was also clearly evident in the reporting of *The Times* at the time of the German revolution that preceded the founding of the Weimar Republic, as I have briefly outlined.

Second, as would be expected in view of the nature of the press as a medium of conveying up-to-date information, the foreign press paid attention to antisemitic occurrences the moment they happened, that is, while they were “hot stories” with a high news value. As soon as the immediate antisemitic outbreak was over, the foreign papers lost interest.¹²⁶ Thus, the Scheunenviertel riots were discussed over the course of two or three days. However, although, with very few exceptions, the foreign papers generally acknowledged the antisemitic character of the riots and held the German political right with their anti-Jewish propaganda campaigns responsible for the outbreak of the serious excesses, they did not take the incident as an opportunity to investigate more deeply the precarious position of the Ostjuden in Germany.¹²⁷

Third, foreign papers generally paid little attention to the Jews themselves as the victims of antisemitism, and they rarely represented antisemitism in terms of a threat to the Jewish community in Germany. Instead, the Scheunenviertel riots aroused the interest of the foreign press primarily as further evidence of the political and social crisis in Germany. The foreign papers linked antisemitism to the anti-democratic activities of the German reactionaries, who employed anti-Jewish propaganda to incite the hate of the population against the Republican government. Yet there was no discussion of the social roots of German antisemitism, for instance of the possibility that Germans might be attracted to political parties of the extreme right because of their avowed Jew-hatred.¹²⁸ Although German antisemitism developed into a mass phenomenon during the early years of the Weimar Republic, foreign newspapers did not perceive it as a particularly disquieting spectacle. One reason might be that Jew-hatred was widespread in most European societies and also in the United States in the interwar years.¹²⁹

Apart from these similarities, the foreign press reports differed in one important respect: certain papers, in particular the conservative and the Catholic ones, showed a visible negative bias against eastern Jews, who were represented as backward, unsympathetic individuals doing illegal business and being actively engaged with Bolshevism. This negative attitude cannot simply be attributed to the fact that the foreign journalists took on the antisemitic views contained in their

¹²⁶ Von Selchow, pp. 57-58.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 50-51, 28-29.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 50, 58, 94; Granzow, *Mirror*, p. 125.

¹²⁹ On antisemitism during the interwar years, see David S. Wyman and Charles H. Rosenzweig (eds.), *The World Reacts to the Holocaust*, Baltimore/London 1996; Wolfgang Benz (ed.), *Handbuch des Antisemitismus. Judenfeindschaft in Geschichte und Gegenwart*: vol. I: Länder und Regionen, Munich 2008.

sources. Rather, it also reflects the anti-Jewish sentiment and fear of Bolshevism prevalent in most European societies and in the United States during the interwar years, particularly in conservative circles. For antisemitism was by no means a German speciality, as the somewhat narrow historiographical focus on German antisemitism since the Kaiserreich as pre-history to the Holocaust might imply.¹³⁰

This study has examined the discourses in British, French, Italian, Austrian, and American newspapers. These foreign press discourses reveal a European, indeed a global, dimension of German antisemitism. We may thus speak of the riot in the Scheunenviertel as a “transnational media event” that triggered intense media responses and interactions across national borders, thereby enabling publics and governments outside Germany to form an opinion on its implications. Two newspaper articles from the *Judische Rundschau* and the *New York Times* hint at a critical reception of German Jew-hatred abroad with potentially serious political effects. Further research should therefore focus on the question of how foreign publics and governments perceived the news of German Jew-hatred and what influence these perceptions exerted on the public image and the diplomatic relations of the Weimar Republic, as opposed to those of the Third Reich. The latter have already been researched by historians, albeit mainly in relation to the Anglo-American media. The transnational perspective, i.e. the “export” of antisemitism and its perception across national and cultural borders, remains a little studied facet in the Jewish history of the Weimar Republic.¹³¹

¹³⁰ Christoph Nonn, *Antisemitismus*, Darmstadt, 2008, pp. 32-33. The research project “Der Erste Weltkrieg und die Konflikte der europäischen Nachkriegsordnung (1914-1923)” at the Technical University of Berlin (Zentrum für Antisemitismusforschung) studies the development of antisemitism in Europe from a comparative perspective (http://www.tu-berlin.de/fakultaet_i/zentrum_fuer_antisemitismusforschung/menue/forschung/forschungskolleg_i/der_i/erste_i/weltkrieg_i/und_i/die_i/konflikte_der_europaeischen_nachkriegsordnung_1914-1923/, accessed 27 February 2014). On antisemitism in Europe and elsewhere, see Wyman and Rosenzweig; Benz, *Handbuch*, vol. I.

¹³¹ Nonn pp. 114-115.