# Introduction

This book is a reexamination of the foreign policy of Hitler's Third Reich toward the Arabic-speaking world of North Africa, the Fertile Crescent, and the Arabian Peninsula before and during the Second World War. Although it touches briefly on the roles of the non-Arab states of Turkey and Iran in German geopolitical and military considerations during those years, its focus remains on the Arab lands, all of which remained in varying degrees under the influence or control of a European colonial power. Turkey, unlike the Arab states, was a fully sovereign and independent state, one toward which Hitler's regime pursued a consistent policy before and after 1939 based on the recognition and support for Turkey's territorial integrity, independence, and in particular its neutrality in a European war. Iran was more or less independent as well, at least until the Anglo-Soviet occupations of August 1941. It was neither an immediate object of competing European imperial ambition, nor in close proximity to German and Italian geopolitical interest and military reach in eastern Europe, the Mediterranean region, and parts of Africa.

The book's focus on the Arab world is presented within the framework of two central, interconnected issues in the larger history of National Socialism and the Third Reich, namely the geopolitical interests and ambitions of Hitler's National Socialist regime and its racial ideology and "world view." It seeks to define the geopolitical interests and policies of Nazi Germany in the Arab lands of the Middle East and North Africa, within the context of Hitler's primary ambitions in Europe, Germany's relationships with the other European powers in the Mediterranean area, and Arab nationalism. It also considers Nazi racial attitudes and policies toward the Arab population that lived in those regions, and more generally with "colonial peoples" living under some form of European control throughout the world at that time.

In recent years, events in the Middle East and beyond have generated a renewed interest among scholars and non-scholars alike in the relationship

between Hitler's Germany and the Arab lands of the Middle East and North Africa. This is especially true with regard to the Second World War and the Nazi persecution and mass murder of the Jews in Europe. Prior to the end of the last century, there were a few scholarly studies that appeared beginning in the 1960s that focused on the aims and policies of Nazi Germany in the Arab Middle East. Few, if any, provided much detail on the reactions of Arab leaders, intellectuals, and the general Arab population to National Socialism, Germany, and Nazi Jewish policy.[1] However, much of the more recent literature has begun to examine the responses of the Arab populations of the Middle East and North Africa to Hitler, National Socialism, German and European anti-Semitism, and the destruction of the Jews in Europe. Moreover, they consider the question of Arab responses to National Socialism and the Holocaust in Europe not only during the Second World War, but also in the turbulent decades in the Arab world following the end of the war. One might engage in conjecture and attribute the recent spike in interest in the topic of Arab and Islamic responses to Nazism and the Holocaust to a host of developments: the rapid growth of fundamentalist Islamic organizations and movements in the Middle East over the past several decades; the continuing Israeli-Palestinian conflict; the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran and elsewhere; the American wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; as well as the issue of terrorism and the so-called war on terror since the attacks of September 11, 2001.

Some of the recent literature tends to offer simplistic generalizations about the responses to Hitler, National Socialism, and Nazi anti-Semitism in a very large, complex, and highly diverse Arabic-speaking part of the world that stretches from the Atlantic coast of Morocco in the west to the Persian Gulf and Iraq's border with Iran in the east, and from the Syrian and Iraqi borders with Turkey in the north to the southern coast of the Arabian Peninsula. A few are works by scholars in the field of modern European and German history, the Third Reich, and the Holocaust. As such, these provide valuable new information on, analysis of, and insights into, German policy and propaganda

[1] On the question of German Middle East policy, there was some interest in the mid 1960s with the appearance of the following: Lukasz Hirszowicz, *The Third Reich and the Arab East* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966); Heinz Tillmann, *Deutschlands Araberpolitik im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag für Wissenschaft, 1965); Robert Melka, "The Axis and the Arab Middle East, 1930–1945," Diss. University of Minnesota, 1966; Mohamed-Kamal el Dessouki, "Hitler und der Nahe Osten," Diss. Berlin, 1963; and Joseph Schechtman, *The Mufti and the Führer: The Rise and fall of Haj Amin el-Husseini* (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1965). Several additional works on specific aspects of Nazi policy appeared during the three decades following the 1960s, among them: Bernd Schröder, *Deutschland und der Mittlere Osten im Zweiten Welkkrieg* (Göttingen: Musterschmidt Verlag, 1975); Yair Hirschfeld, *Deutschland und Iran im Spielfeld der Mächte* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1980); Francis R. Nicosia, *The Third Reich and the Palestine Question* (Austin and London: University of Texas Press and I.B. Tauris, 1985); Uriel Dann (ed.), *The Great Powers and the Middle East, 1919–1939* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1988); and Edgar Flacker, "Fritz Grobba and Nazi Germany's Middle East Policy, 1933–1942," Diss. London, 1998.

toward the Arab Middle East and North Africa.[2] However, even they, not unlike many of the non-scholarly, often polemical, literature that has appeared since the World Trade Center attacks of September 11, 2001, at times imply the existence of a generally singular, uniform Arab world, with a more or less uniform reception of Hitler, National Socialism, and the persecution and mass murder of the Jews in Europe. They often assume the existence of an Arab world in the Fertile Crescent, the Arabian Peninsula, and North Africa that constituted a generally uniform and monolithic ethnic, cultural, political, and religious entity with a more or less singular world view. As such, they provide neither the necessary historical and cultural context of the modern Middle East, nor do they really utilize the important and diverse Arabic-language sources that historians and other scholars of the modern Middle East naturally have consulted on this important topic.

In his analysis of Nazi propaganda to the Middle East during the Second World War, Jeffrey Herf rightly concludes that the Nazi state and party, along with the German military, "... made strenuous efforts with the resources at their disposal to export the regime's ideology in ways that they hoped would strike a nerve among Arabs and Muslims."[3] He also points out that Allied and German intelligence services "... all found evidence that there were individuals and groups from which the Axis might have expected strong support."[4] Just as scholars of the history of the Third Reich and the Second World War would hardly disagree with Herf's first point, scholars of modern Middle Eastern history would generally concur with his second point. Moreover, Klaus-Michael Mallmann and Martin Cüppers present important information about, and insight into, Nazi plans and activities with regard to the Middle East during the Second World War. These include efforts by the Nazi regime to intensify hatred of the Jews among the Arab populations, as well as evidence for Nazi plans during the war to extend the "final solution," the mass murder of the Jews in Europe, to the ancient Jewish communities in the Arab lands of North Africa and the Middle East.[5] As scholars of modern Europe and Germany, Mallmann and Cüppers, Herf, and a few others make important contributions to our knowledge and understanding of the Third Reich, and its attitudes and policies toward the Arab world.[6] Their focus on the handful of Arab exiles in wartime Berlin and Rome is indeed important for understanding German and

[2] See for example the studies by Klaus-Michael Mallmann and Martin Cüppers, *Halbmond und Hakenkreuz: Das Dritte Reich, die Araber und Palästina* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2006); Klaus Gensicke, *Der Mufti von Jerusalem und die Nationalsozialisten: Eine politische Biographie Amin el-Husseinis* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007); Jeffrey Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); and most recently Barry Rubin and Wolfgang Schwanitz, *Nazis, Islamists, and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014).

[3] Herf. *Nazi Propaganda*, 263 [4] Ibid.

[5] Mallmann and Cüppers, *Halbmond und Hakenkreuz*, 137 ff.

[6] See also Gensicke, *Der Mufti von Jerusalem*, chap. 4.

Axis policy toward the Arab world during the war; this study also uses these individuals to this particular end. However, a focus on those Arab exiles in wartime Berlin alone does not provide an adequate lens for understanding how the diverse populations, organizations, and institutions in the Arab world reacted to National Socialism and the policies of the Third Reich in Europe.

Some of the recent literature at times attributes Arab motives and Arab violence against Jews in Palestine and elsewhere in the region during the years 1933–1945 to a historically-rooted, religiously- and culturally-based hatred of Jews. For example, Klaus Gensicke feels compelled to attribute the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem's particular hatred of the Jews to Arabs in general, with little analysis or context: "This fanatical extremism has become a tradition that remains as virulent as it was at the time of the 'great uprising' (1936–1939) and represents a failed policy of refusal to compromise, of irreconcilability, and of 'all or nothing.'"[7] Mallmann and Cüppers, moreover, speculate that the anti-Semitic potential of the Arabs as a whole during the summer of 1942, as Erwin Rommel seemed poised to achieve victory over the British in Egypt and eventually Palestine, was the same as that of the Lithuanians, the Latvians, and the Ukrainians a year earlier in Europe: "There is no reason, therefore, why the anti-Semitic potential of the Lithuanian, Latvian, or Ukrainian nationalists should have been greater than that of the Arabs as they awaited the German army."[8] In drawing conclusions about Nazi wartime propaganda to the Arab world, often a joint effort of the Nazi regime and Arab exiles in Berlin, Herf concludes: "Nazi Germany's Arabic-language propaganda during World War II was the product of a remarkable political and ideological synthesis that took place in wartime Berlin. . .These materials displayed a synthesis of Nazism, Arab nationalism, and fundamentalist Islam."[9] While each of these three points may indeed possess some element of truth for some Arabs, they also infer general truths about Arabs, Arab history, Arab nationalism, and Arab responses to National Socialism. As such, they can be simplistic generalizations that are impossible to demonstrate in the absence of a necessary Middle Eastern historical context, familiarity with Arabic-language sources, and the fortunate reality that Nazi Germany was defeated in the Second World War.

Likewise, this study cannot consult what is no doubt a large and essential array of Arabic-language sources that would enable it to draw legitimate and, of necessity, nuanced conclusions about the reception of Nazi ideas and policies in the Arab world between 1933 and 1945. Therefore, rather than drawing such conclusions, this book will leave the question of Arab reception of, and responses to, National Socialist Germany to scholars of the Middle East who have undertaken this task. Moreover, some of the aforementioned recent

[7] Ibid., 192. [8] Mallmann and Cüppers, *Halbmond und Hakenkreuz*, 164.
[9] Herf, *Nazi Propaganda*, 261.

scholarship tends to ignore or dismiss as a motivating force among Arabs at that time, early and mid-twentieth-century Muslim and Christian Arab resentment against western imperialism and domination of the region since the nineteenth century. Notwithstanding legitimate Zionist efforts to deal with centuries of anti-Semitism and persecution in Europe, as well as issues of Jewish identity and survival in the Diaspora, some tend to dismiss Palestinian Arab fears that Zionism, the Zionist movement, and the Jewish National Home, within the context of Arab resentment against continuing European imperialism in the region, ultimately sought a Jewish majority and state in Mandatory Palestine after the First World War.[10] Examples of Arab hatred and violence against Jews in Palestine and elsewhere in the region during the more than two decades following the First World War are undeniable. That many Arabs during those decades did in fact resent European imperialism in the region, and did fear and resent Zionism and Jewish immigration as serious obstacles to the achievement of Arab national self-determination in Palestine, is equally undeniable. That some may use the reality of European imperialism and fears of Zionism to explain – not to justify or defend – a large part of that hatred and violence is both reasonable and necessary if we are to fully understand this history. Of course, even a partial explanation such as this would conflict with claims that Arab animosity toward Jews was and remains a mirror image of the deeply ingrained, historical hatred and persecution of Jews in Europe.

The important topic of Arab responses to Hitler, National Socialism, and Nazi persecution and destruction of the Jews in Europe between 1933 and 1945 is something that this author will leave to historians and other scholars of the modern Middle East. They possess the expertise in the modern history of the Arab world, and are able to do the essential research in

[10] See for example Mallmann and Cüppers, *Halbmond und Hakenkreuz*, Chap. 1; and Herf, *Nazi Propaganda*, 261–266. While certainly not a replacement for Arabic-language primary sources, some Zionist sources can provide useful and important context to this issue. Chaim Weizmann's pronouncement at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 that the aim of Zionism was "to make Palestine as Jewish as England is English" sent an unambiguous message to the Arab majority in Palestine. See Chaim Weizmann, *Trial and Error: The Autobiography of Chaim Weizmann* (New York: Harper, 1949), 244. Vladimir Jabotinsky rejected any compromise with the Arabs over the absolute necessity of a Jewish majority and state in Palestine, noting that, as Walter Laqueur has written, "the Arabs loved their country [Palestine] as much as the Jews did. Instinctively, they understood Zionist aspirations very well, and their decision to resist them was only natural." See Walter Laqueur, *A History of Zionism* (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1972), 256. David Ben Gurion's 1938 statement "I support compulsory transfer. I don't see anything immoral in it," might have served to heighten Arab fears. See Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict* (New York: Vintage, 2001), 144. On the other hand, and to illustrate the degree of Arab rejectionism to which Mallmann and Cüppers refer, the call of some Zionists, especially Brit Shalom, during the interwar period for a binational state based on Jewish-Arab equality, was vehemently rejected by most Arab leaders, as it was by most Zionists. See Steven Aschheim, *Beyond the Border: The German-Jewish Legacy Abroad* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 6–44.

Arabic-language sources that are necessary in such an endeavor. In recent years, there has emerged a growing body of scholarship that includes monographs, collections of essays, and individual journal articles by scholars of the Middle East and Islam who examine the complexities and varieties of Arab responses to Hitler's Germany.[11] As is usually the case in scholarly discourse, there are substantive disagreements among them over various issues. However, their works seem to generally exhibit a common recognition of the considerable size, diversity, and complexity of the Arabic-speaking world, and of the consequent multiplicity and range of Arab attitudes and responses to Germany, National Socialism, Nazi anti-Semitism, and the persecution and mass murder of the Jews in Europe. These multiple responses, the natural result of such diversity, would preclude simple generalizations about the Arab world in the 1930s and 1940s. Moreover, some make use of this historical context in their analyses of the impact and legacy of those years on the turbulent developments in the region in the decades following 1945. Their knowledge and understanding of the modern history of the region, as well as their research in Arabic-language sources, provide a necessary context for the debates that arise from this very sensitive topic. They provide a perspective that those of us in the fields of modern European and German history, anti-Semitism, National Socialism, and the Holocaust are usually not in a position to adequately provide. In the end, they generally assume the existence of a large and diverse "Arab world," one that was certainly far larger and more diverse in its responses to Hitler and National Socialism than merely the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Rashid Ali al-Gaylani of Iraq, and other Arab exiles in wartime Berlin.

[11] See most recently Stefan Wild (ed.), *Die Welt des Islams*, International Journal for the Study of Modern Islam, Special Theme Issue: "Islamofascism"? 52, 3-4 (2012); and Omar Kamil, *Der Holocaust im arabischen Gedächtnis. Eine Diskursgeschichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012). See also Götz Nordbruch, *Nazism in Syria and Lebanon: The Ambivalence of the German Option, 1933–1945* (New York: Routledge, 2009); Gilbert Achcar, *The Arabs and the Holocaust: The Arab-Israeli War of Narratives* (New York: Henry Holt, 2009); Meir Litvak and Esther Webman, *From Empathy to Denial: Arab Responses to the Holocaust* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009); Peter Wien, *Iraqi Arab Nationalism: Authoritarian, Totalitarian, and Pro-Fascist Inclinations, 1932–1941* (New York: Routledge, 2006); Israel Gershoni and Götz Nordbruch, *Sympathie und Schrecken. Begegnungen mit Faschismus und Nationalsozialismus in Ägypten 1922–1937* (Berlin: Schwarz, 2011); Gerhard Höpp, Peter Wien, and René Wildangel (eds.), *Blind für die Geschichte? Arabische Begegnungen mit dem Nationalsozialismus* (Berlin: Hans Schiler Verlag, 2004). See also the essays by Ulrike Freitag and Israel Gershoni, Peter Wien, Nir Arielli, Jeffrey Herf, Anna Baldinetti, and Mustapha Kabha in the special edition of *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 37 (3), 2011, edited by Ulrike Freitag and Israel Gershoni. These essays are from the international workshop "Arab Responses to Fascism and Nazism, 1933–1945: Reappraisals and New Directions," which took place at Tel Aviv University and the Open University in Israel in May 2010. An older but very useful source on this question is Stefan Wild, "National Socialism in the Arab Near East Between 1933 and 1939," *Die Welt des Islams* 25 (1985): 126–173.

That some Arabs eagerly sought to make common cause with Germany in the decades following the First World War, regardless of the nature of its government, is certainly clear. It would seem the logical and inevitable outcome of a post–World War I settlement in the Middle East that clearly did not satisfy the goal of many Arabs for immediate national self-determination and independence from foreign rule. Winston Churchill met with a delegation of Muslim and Christian Arabs in Haifa during a visit to Palestine in March 1921, on the heels of Palestinian Arab unrest and violence in the immediate postwar years. With a postwar settlement in place that virtually ignored the expectations and demands of Arabs in general, it is not surprising that the atmosphere of this meeting was one of confrontation and recrimination. Arabs expressed anger over what they perceived as broken promises and betrayal by the Allies during and immediately following the First World War. By the time of Churchill's meeting with Arab leaders in Haifa, it had become clear that British and French control over much of the former Arab territories of the Ottoman Empire would be formalized with League of Nations mandates. These included a British mandate over Palestine, and a Jewish National Home that would be incorporated into the mandate. The expansion of Anglo-French imperial influence and control to include the entire Fertile Crescent, along with the creation of a Jewish National Home within Britain's Mandate for Palestine, would trump the attainment of Arab national self-determination and independence. The Arab delegation issued the following warning to Churchill that would be of significance in the decades that followed:

> Today the Arabs' belief in England is not what it was. . .If England does not take up the cause of the Arabs, other powers will. From India, Mesopotamia, the Hedjaz and Palestine the cry goes up to England now. If she does not listen, then perhaps Russia will take up their call someday, or perhaps even Germany.[12]

This study is limited to an examination of the intent and the policy of the Third Reich with regard to the Arab lands of the Middle East and North Africa from Hitler's assumption of power in 1933 through most of the Second World War. It does so, in a sense, with an implicit reference to the warning contained in the last sentence of the statement by the Arab delegation to Churchill in Haifa in 1921. There are many references to and discussions of periodic Arab overtures for German support during the Nazi years. Although these overtures constitute an important component of this study, there is no attempt to offer an analysis of, or conclusions about, overall Arab attitudes and responses to National Socialism, the Nazi state, and its policies in Europe. This book does, however, assume the existence of a general frustration and anger among Arabs against a post–World War I settlement that effectively denied them the independence they had expected and believed to be rightfully theirs. There was

[12] Doreen Ingrams (ed.), *Palestine Papers, 1917–1922: Seeds of Conflict* (London: John Murray, 1972), 118.

indeed a fondness among Arabs for Germany that likely stemmed from the general conviction that Germany, alone among the European powers, had never harbored imperial ambitions in the Arab world. Based on that conviction, of course, many attempts by Arab leaders to solicit German support for overturning the post–World War I settlement in the Middle East would materialize during the Weimar and Nazi periods.[13] This sympathy for Germany also produced an important constant in Nazi Germany's attitudes and policy toward the Arab world, namely the persistent refusal of Hitler's government to unequivocally recognize and openly support Arab efforts to overturn the post–World War I status quo in the Middle East through the achievement of real independence from European control. This study is limited, therefore, to the substance of Nazi Germany's ideological and strategic interests and policies in the Arab lands of the Middle East and North Africa, albeit beyond the platitudes and assertions contained in Nazi propaganda in the region during the Second World War.

Finally, this book considers the many important instances of requests that some Arab representatives made to Germany during the Weimar and Nazi periods for diplomatic and material support against British, French, Italian, and Spanish colonial rule in the region, and against Jewish immigration to the Jewish National Home in Palestine. Its focus is on German responses to those requests in order to understand the intent of German policy toward the Arab world, rather than on Arab attitudes toward Germany, National Socialism, and Nazi Jewish policy. These initiatives on the part of some Arabs appear regularly in the German diplomatic reports from the Middle East to Berlin, and naturally constitute an element in the relationship between Hitler's Germany and various sectors of the Arab nationalist movement during those years. Some of the more obvious, numerous, and useful examples of Arab initiatives are those involving the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Amin al-Husayni, as well as Rashid Ali al-Gaylani of Iraq, and a few other representatives in the Arab lands or living in exile in wartime Berlin. The book draws conclusions only about the substance of Germany's responses to those Arab initiatives within the context of German interests and policy in the Arab world; the larger meaning or significance of those Arab initiatives as part of a more general Arab reception of Germany, National Socialism, and Nazi Jewish policy is left to other scholars. The mostly German primary sources used in this study clearly provide an abundant documentary basis for drawing conclusions about the motivations

[13] This view is referred to time and again in the correspondence within the German Foreign Office in Berlin, and between it and German diplomatic missions in the Arab world during the Weimar and Nazi periods. See for instance Institut für Zeitgeschichte (hereafter IfZ): Nachlaß Werner-Otto von Hentig, ED 113/34, "Großarabien und die Lage in Syrien," Aufzeichnung Werner-Otto von Hentig, 26. Februar 1941; and ED 113/6, "Der Orient in seiner politischen Entwicklung seit dem Weltkrieg," n.d. Additional references to this view will be made in the chapters to follow.

and aims of Hitler's government; they do not necessarily do the same for Arab motivations and intent as a whole, beyond reflecting a clear Arab desire for self-determination and independence. While these sources do indeed provide important information for an understanding and evaluation of some of the motivations and ambitions of the Mufti and other Arab exiles in wartime Berlin, neither they nor the activities of German and Italian-based Arab exiles are used in isolation to draw larger conclusions about the Arab world as a whole during those years.

Scholars of the history of the Third Reich and the Second World War have long debated the larger question of Hitler's ultimate geopolitical aims and ambitions in Europe and the rest of the world. A major divide among them has been the extent to which Hitler and his Nazi state had developed specific ideas and ambitions for the world beyond the European continent, after an anticipated victory over the Soviet Union and the conquest of German "living space" (*Lebensraum*) in Europe.[14] Some have argued that Hitler's ultimate goals were "continental" in nature and scope, limited to Europe, while others have insisted that his goals extended beyond Europe, and thus were "global." Some of the earliest and most important historians of modern Germany and the Third Reich in the postwar period represented the "continental" interpretation. Scholars such as Hans-Adolf Jacobsen, Hugh Trevor-Roper, Alan Bullock, Axel Kuhn, Eberhard Jäckel, and others outlined Hitler's systematic plans for a war of conquest that was essentially limited to continental Europe and to its complete reorganization under the control of a Greater German Reich.[15] Others made the argument that Hitler's geopolitical aims and ambitions were ultimately global in nature. Scholars such as Andreas Hillgrüber, Klaus Hildebrand, Jochen Thies, Gerhard Weinberg, and others argued that they evolved as the Second World War progressed, extending from the European continent to the world beyond.[16]

[14] See Volker Berghahn's Foreward in the new English edition of Jochen Thies's *Hitler's Plans for Global Domination: Nazi Architecture & Ultimate War Aims* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), xii. Thies's original German edition is *Architekt der Weltherrschaft. Die Endziele Hitlers* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1976).

[15] See for example Hans-Adolf Jacobsen, *Nationalsozialistische Außenpolitik 1933–1938* (Frankfurt am Main: Alfred Metzner Verlag, 1968); Hugh Trevor-Roper, "Hitlers Kriegsziele," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 8 (1960): 121–133; Alan Bullock, *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny* (New York: Harper and Row, 1962); Axel Kuhn, *Hitlers Aussenpolitisches Program* (Stuttgart: Klett Verlag, 1970); Eberhard Jäckel, *Hitlers Weltanschauung. Entwurf einer Herrschaft* (Tübingen: Rainer Wunderlich Verlag Hermann Leins, 1969).

[16] See for example Andreas Hillgruber, *Hitlers Strategie. Politik und Kriegführung 1940–1941* (Frankfurt am Main: Bernhard Graefe Verlag für Wehrwesen, 1965), and "England's Place in Hitler's Plans for World Domination," *Journal of Contemporary History* 9 (1974): 5–22; Klaus Hildebrand, *Vom Reich zum Weltreich. Hitler, NSDAP und Kolonianfrage 1919–1945* (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1969); Thies, *Architekt der Weltherrschaft*; Gerhard Weinberg, *A World at Arms: A Global History of World War II* (New York: Cambridge

To a significant extent, this debate has been linked to the debates over the ultimate aims of Nazi anti-Semitism and race policy in Europe and beyond. Nazi racial ideology was always an inherent part of the geopolitical considerations of the Nazi state as it planned and waged war. There certainly has been general agreement on the central role of racial ideology in the development of Hitler's geopolitical plans for Europe from the early days of the National Socialist movement. The National Socialist German Workers Party (NSDAP) and the Nazi state after 1933 often professed Germany's rightful pursuit of *Lebensraum* for the German people (*Volk*), within the context of a "new racial order" (*rassische Neuordnung*) in Europe. This new German living space would initially be centered in a "racially reorganized" Greater Germany in central Europe, but would eventually expand into the vast reaches of eastern Europe. It would involve the eventual elimination of Jews, Roma and Sinti, and ultimately most of the Slavic peoples, and would likely be followed by some sort of new, but undefined racial order at least in parts of the world beyond the European continent.[17] Of course, one can only speculate on the form that such a new world order outside of Europe would have taken. Moreover, scholarly debates over the Nazi decision-making process that ultimately led to the "final solution to the Jewish question in Europe," the decision in the fall of 1941 to systematically murder all of the Jews in Europe, of necessity involved the relationship between race theory and anti-Semitism on the one hand, and geopolitical calculations and timing with regard to Europe and the Soviet Union on the other. The final solution was clearly a central part of Nazi military and political efforts in the war for the conquest of living space in Europe. Scholars such as Saul Friedländer and Christopher Browning have largely put the debates surrounding the decision-making process and the final solution to rest with the recognition of some degree of improvisation in Nazi implementation of its racial ideology, within the context of foreign policy and war. Friedländer has concluded:

> The Crimes committed by the Nazi regime were neither a mere outcome of some haphazard, involuntary, imperceptible, and chaotic onrush of unrelated events nor a predetermined enactment of a demonic script; they were the result of converging factors, of the interaction between intentions and contingencies, between discernible causes and

University Press, 1994). For German intentions in specific areas outside of continental Europe, see for example Norman J. W. Goda, *Tomorrow the World: Hitler, Northwest Africa, and the Path toward America* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1998); and Klaus Hildebrand, *Das Dritte Reich*, 7. Aufl. (München: Oldenbourg Verlag, 2009), 77–79.

[17] See, among others, Weinberg, *A World at Arms*, 898 ff. In her recent book, Shelley Baranowski looks at the links between race and empire in modern German history, and contextualizes since the nineteenth century German imperialist ambitions in Eastern Europe, and even beyond, as embracing ethnic homogeneity over diversity, imperial enlargement over stasis, and "living space" as the route to the biological survival of the German Volk. See her *Nazi Empire: German Colonialism and Imperialism from Bismarck to Hitler* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).