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978-1-107-07399-9 - *Hi Hitler!*: How the Nazi Past is Being Normalized in Contemporary Culture

Gavriel D. Rosenfeld

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Hi Hitler!

The Third Reich's legacy is in flux. For much of the postwar period, the Nazi era has been viewed moralistically as an exceptional period of history intrinsically different from all others. Since the turn of the millennium, however, this view has been challenged by a powerful wave of normalization. Gavriel D. Rosenfeld charts this important international trend by examining the shifting representation of the Nazi past in contemporary Western intellectual and cultural life. Focusing on works of historical scholarship, popular novels, counterfactual histories, feature films, and Internet websites, he identifies notable changes in the depiction of the Second World War, the Holocaust, and the figure of Adolf Hitler himself. By exploring the origins of these works and assessing the controversies they have sparked in the United States and Europe, *Hi Hitler!* offers a fascinating and timely analysis of the shifting status of the Nazi past in Western memory.

Gavriel D. Rosenfeld is Professor of History at Fairfield University.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

“What if” questions abound in this book, and the first involves the ironies of gratitude. Back in 2008, I submitted a newly completed journal article on the revisionist turn in recent World War II historiography to one of the leading publications in the historical profession, only to be told that its word count was more than twice the length permitted by the journal’s submission rules. Daunted by the task of cutting so much material from the essay, I was unsure about whether to accept the editor’s offer to edit it and resubmit. I soon declined, however, following a brief discussion with my father, who suggested that I keep the essay as is and incorporate it into a larger study on the memory of the Nazi past since the turn of the millennium. Inspired by his suggestion, I proceeded to expand my analysis to encompass a variety of related topics, all of which are included in the present volume. In retrospect, it is clear to me that had my article been accepted for publication, my book probably would never have come into existence. My acknowledgments thus begin with an ironic extension of thanks to the unnamed academic journal for validating the law of unintended consequences and facilitating my book’s publication.

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