

# Antisemitism and the Critique of Capitalism

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It would be impossible to overstate how central a role the conceptualization of antisemitism played in the evolution of the Frankfurt School's critical theory. The latter is inseparable from, and incomprehensible without, the former. It is all the more remarkable that the reception of the Frankfurt School's grappling with antisemitism did not begin in earnest until the late 1970s.

Eva-Maria Ziege has shown in her compelling account of the intellectual development of the Frankfurt School (Institute of Social Research) in exile, that the core group around Horkheimer and Adorno by no means abandoned or even attenuated its fundamental Marxist orientation, though it did take an esoteric turn.<sup>1</sup> The conscious elimination of conventional Marxist terminology from the original, privately circulated version of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* prior to its publication in 1947<sup>2</sup> reflects this esoteric turn yet does not indicate that Horkheimer and Adorno abandoned the fundamental critique of capitalism. As Moishe Postone and

Barbara Brick have pointed out, 'the frequently described shift of critical theory from the analysis of political economy to a critique of instrumental reason does not ... signify that the theorists of the Frankfurt School abandoned the former in favour of the latter. Rather, that shift was based on a particular conception of political economy' (on which more in a moment).<sup>3</sup>

It was initially Adorno who alerted his colleagues to the crucial heuristic significance of antisemitism. 'I am gradually finding, not least under the influence of the latest news from Germany', Adorno wrote to Horkheimer on 5 August 1940 (roughly a year before the Nazi regime decided to go ahead with the genocide),

that I just cannot stop thinking about the fate of the Jews. It often seems to me that everything we were accustomed to seeing in terms of the proletariat has been concentrated today with horrendous force upon the Jews. No matter what happens to the [research] project, I ask myself whether we should not say what we want to say

in connection with the Jews, who now represent the counterpoint to the concentration of power.<sup>4</sup>

In the proposal for the research project he mentioned in the letter, Adorno had written that, 'if it is true that one has to understand National Socialism to understand antisemitism, then it is equally true that one has to understand antisemitism to understand National Socialism'.<sup>5</sup>

This was an obvious reference to Horkheimer's 'The Jews and Europe' of 1939, which began with the words: 'Whoever wants to explain antisemitism must speak of National Socialism'.<sup>6</sup> Yet Adorno's reading contrasted sharply with Franz Neumann's contention that 'one can offer an account of National Socialism without attributing a central role to the Jewish problem'. Neumann took it for granted that Adorno himself did not believe otherwise and had suggested so in the proposal merely for tactical reasons. Neumann insisted that antisemitism had 'receded as a central ideological tenet' of National Socialism. Even when writing grant proposals, Neumann admonished Adorno (and, by extension, Horkheimer), 'one should not give up one's theoretical position entirely'.<sup>7</sup>

This disagreement on the significance and meaning of antisemitism can be mapped neatly onto the controversy between Neumann, Gurland and Kirchheimer, on the one hand, and Pollock, Horkheimer and Adorno, on the other, regarding their respective characterizations of contemporaneous capitalism.<sup>8</sup> Confronted with a massive surge in economic centralization, state intervention, social regimentation, populism and political authoritarianism in the interwar period, Pollock argued that capitalism had entered into a new phase, that of state capitalism, in which the market had effectively been eliminated and overall control had reverted to the political sphere (now organized in the form of rackets). While Neumann, Gurland and Kirchheimer continued to insist on the primacy of economic factors in understanding the capitalist order,

Pollock argued for the primacy of the political, and Horkheimer and Adorno adopted his point of view. Horkheimer and Adorno subsequently placed considerable emphasis on the demise of the sphere of circulation as one of the elements facilitating antisemitism not just because they were all too familiar with the conventional association of the Jews with the sphere of circulation but primarily because the elimination of the market played a central role in Pollock's understanding of state socialism. Hence, as Ziege has pointed out, when Horkheimer and Adorno dedicated *Dialectic of Enlightenment* to Pollock, they were acknowledging not only a profound debt of friendship and collegiality but a fundamental intellectual debt too.<sup>9</sup>

Since state capitalism, according to Pollock's understanding, existed both in democratic and totalitarian forms, much of the critique formulated by Horkheimer and Adorno with a focus on National Socialism – and, by extension, most of what they had to say about contemporaneous antisemitism – was in fact meant as a critique of capitalism in general. Taking this background into account, it is evident that the Frankfurt School's two key programmatic texts on antisemitism – Horkheimer's 'The Jews and Europe' of 1939 and the 'Elements of Antisemitism' that conclude *Dialectic of Enlightenment* – by no means develop radically opposed perspectives, as has frequently been suggested. Rather, 'The Jews and Europe', for all its flaws and infelicities, was a stepping stone towards the rather more multifaceted and complex stance developed in the 'Elements of Antisemitism', and a number of thoughts first formulated in 'The Jews and Europe' recur in the 'Elements'. To be sure, Adorno's insistence that henceforth 'what we want to say' could best be said 'in connection with the Jews' rather than 'in terms of the proletariat' does signify a particular acuity and prescience *vis-à-vis* the threat faced by European Jewry, and would have made little sense had it not been for that threat. I would argue, though – and I should state in the interest of

full disclosure that I have changed my mind on this – that Adorno's plea did not amount to a radical sea change. After all, he wanted to say 'what we want to say', and not something fundamentally new, 'in connection with the Jews'.

While it is true that in their account of the evolution and dynamics of antisemitism in the 'Elements of Antisemitism' (and *Dialectic of Enlightenment* as a whole) Horkheimer and Adorno drew on explanatory factors rooted deeply in the history of human cultural and psychic history, their account was neither ahistorical nor did they conceive of antisemitism – or instrumental reason – as unchanging transhistorical phenomena. There may be much to criticize about the ways in which they mediated between long-term continuities and the specificity of individual historical contexts, but they were clearly aware of the need to do so and sought to meet this challenge. This point bears emphasizing since any critique of capitalism must obviously be based on factors specific to capitalism and to capitalism only. However, it need by no means be based *only* on factors specific to capitalism either. As Postone and Brick have pointed out, Pollock, and Adorno and Horkheimer with him, seem to have paid insufficient attention to the sphere of production (rather than that of circulation) and consequently treated labour as a transhistorical category. Yet far from this signalling a departure from the Marxist critique of capitalism, they were, in so doing, in fact hostage to 'a traditional understanding of Marx's critique of political economy'.<sup>10</sup>

Horkheimer and Adorno's reasoning in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, then, was by no means ahistorical or naively transhistorical. Indeed, one of the great strengths of the account of antisemitism they offered in the 'Elements of Antisemitism' lies in the fact that they viewed its historical evolution and the crystallization of various explanatory factors as an essentially cumulative process. Rather than assuming that various historical forms of anti-Jewish sentiment or practice

had simply been superseded and displaced, or that diverse explanatory factors were mutually exclusive, Horkheimer and Adorno treated them all as having been transcended in the Hegelian sense of *aufgehoben*. To be sure, earlier forms of enmity towards the Jews were not simply perpetuated, they were transformed in the process and their significance and meaning could be dramatically altered as the constellations within which they continued to function changed. However, neither did the loudest form of antisemitism on the market at any given point in time simply supersede all earlier or other forms of anti-Judaism and anti-Jewish sentiment. This dialectical approach to dis/continuities in the evolution of (modern) antisemitism is also well suited to dispelling some of the false dichotomies that currently pervade the debate about the origins and dynamics of contemporary Muslim antisemitism.<sup>11</sup>

At the heart of the Frankfurt School's direct grappling with antisemitism were four texts/projects. These are:

- 1 Horkheimer's article, 'The Jews and Europe', written on the eve of the Second World War, amended slightly to reflect the outbreak of war, and published in the issue of the Institute's own journal, *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, for 1939/40;
- 2 The unpublished, four-volume Labor Study ('Antisemitism among American Labor'), based on a major empirical research project undertaken by the Institute with funding from the Jewish Labor Committee in 1944/45;
- 3 The final section of *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, 'Elements of Antisemitism';
- 4 *The Authoritarian Personality*, one of the *Studies in Prejudice*, published in 1950 and based on a major empirical research project undertaken under the auspices of the Institute that was funded by the American Jewish Committee.

The evolution and interrelatedness of these texts and projects has been expertly reconstructed by Ziege and Jacobs.<sup>12</sup> I will focus primarily on the two more programmatic texts: 'The Jews and Europe' and 'Elements of Antisemitism'.

### 'THE JEWS AND EUROPE'

Horkheimer consciously modelled 'The Jews and Europe' on Karl Marx's 'On the Jewish Question'. Marx's 'On the Jewish Question' was written in two parts. In the much more extensive first part, Marx outlined his understanding of modern society without any meaningful reference to the Jews on whom he focused only in the short second part. 'The Jews and Europe' comprises three sections. The Jews do not feature in the first two sections (making up two thirds of the text), in which Horkheimer presents National Socialism as a totalitarian form of state capitalism. Only in the final section of the text did he come to discuss the situation of the Jews. Clearly, Horkheimer was emulating Marx's attempt to present the question of what the status of Jews should be in society as one integral to the constitution of society as a whole. Gershom Scholem's reaction to 'The Jews and Europe' indicates that this did not go unnoticed. 'It is not enough to take up Marx's essay "On the Jewish Question" (which was already very weak and lopsided a century ago) once again in today's words', he wrote, commenting explicitly on Horkheimer's essay, to Adorno on 15 April 1940.<sup>13</sup>

Readers not familiar with the text can easily assess the bare bones of Horkheimer's line of argument by turning to the abstract published in English with the article.<sup>14</sup> Given that the first two sections focus on a general analysis of National Socialism, most readers are likely to be rather surprised when they arrive at the third section, which begins with the words: 'That is how it is with the Jews' (unless, of course, they are familiar with Marx's 'On the Jewish Question', in which case they will recognize the logic).<sup>15</sup> The Jews who did then appear in the third part of Horkheimer's essay were Jews too desperate or deluded to comprehend that their current ostracization was the logical consequence of the same fundamental rationality that had previously facilitated their emancipation. Just as their emancipation had resulted not from

abstract principles or good will but from the restructuring of society as a whole dictated by the economic necessities of emerging capitalism, so it was the current transformation from liberal to state capitalism that rendered them obsolete and thus made them an ideal scapegoat. As Gerhard Scheit has pointed out, the way in which Horkheimer lays into 'the Jews' in this section is deeply disconcerting. On the other hand, insofar as Horkheimer's critique reflected his deep desperation over the liberal politics of appeasement to which significant numbers of Central and Western European Jews had subscribed, Horkheimer's remarks are not as outlandish or misguided as they may seem to contemporary readers.<sup>16</sup> Where Horkheimer was definitely wide of the mark was in his inference that antisemitism was a feature of fascism on the rise that would become obsolete once it was firmly established. He argued that its purpose was propagandistic: it served to demonstrate that the fascists meant business. Now that National Socialism was secure in Germany, its antisemitism played principally to populations susceptible to fascism in other countries.

'The elimination of anti-Semitism is identical with the struggle against the authoritarian state', Horkheimer concluded. Having appropriated Marx's logic in 'On the Jewish Question' that one needed to talk about society as a whole if one wanted to talk about antisemitism (or the position of Jews in society more generally), what was still missing was the insistence on its inversion.<sup>17</sup> That Horkheimer saw the subsequent development in exactly these terms is evident from a draft of the letter he eventually sent to Harold Laski in March 1941. It contains what is probably the most widely quoted formulation by Horkheimer on this matter: 'As true as it is that one can understand Antisemitism only from our society, as true it appears to me to become that by now society itself can be properly understood only through Antisemitism'.<sup>18</sup> The sentence immediately preceding this statement has drawn less

attention. ‘It appears to me as if the old instruments would no longer suffice’, Horkheimer wrote, ‘not even that treaty [treatise] “Zur Judenfrage”’.<sup>19</sup>

### ‘ELEMENTS OF ANTISEMITISM’

The final section of *Dialectic of Enlightenment*,<sup>20</sup> ‘Elements of Antisemitism’, comprises seven theses, of which six already formed part of the privately circulated version of 1944. Prior to the publication of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* in 1947, Horkheimer and Adorno added a seventh thesis.<sup>21</sup> In the preface, Horkheimer and Adorno acknowledged that they had written the first three theses ‘with Leo Löwenthal’.<sup>22</sup>

*Thesis One.* The core contention of the first thesis is easily identified: antisemitism is not an aberration from, but an integral outgrowth of, the existing social order. ‘The Jews’, Horkheimer and Adorno wrote, ‘are today the group that, in practice and in theory, draws to itself the annihilatory urge that the wrong social order brings forth’ (197). While the fascist viewpoint was predicated on the assumption that humanity’s future depended on the annihilation of all Jews, its liberal counterpart was based on the claim that a united, unitary humanity already existed, in which distinct Jewish features were at best a throwback, soon to be ironed out by assimilation. Consequently, the latter amounted to an affirmation of the status quo and those who propagated it committed what, from the viewpoint of critical theory, was probably the foremost sin, that of ‘invoking the finite as infinite, lies as truth’ (46). The fascist contention that the fate of the Jews was central to the future of humanity was true in the sense that the fascists had made it true. The liberal claim was true in the sense that social formations were indeed becoming increasingly homogeneous. For while the Jews had scrambled to conform to the standards of liberal bourgeois society by exercising a

high measure of enlightened self control and shaking off the embarrassing traces of their earlier discrimination, the bourgeois order had regressed into the ethnic and racializing forms of community that were now in the ascendancy. Race, Horkheimer and Adorno insisted, was no authentic, natural category but signified a reductionist notion of nature as a solely oppressive force and an obstinate insistence that the particularisms that prevailed under the existing order were in fact universalisms. Consequently, ‘the liberal Jews now find themselves at the receiving end of the social harmony to which they aspired’, albeit ‘in the form of the *Volksgemeinschaft*’, Horkheimer and Adorno noted acerbically (199). The bourgeois Jews’ fundamental misunderstanding had been the assumption that antisemitism was an aberration from the existing order, when in fact it was its logical outgrowth. Yet, ‘the persecution of the Jews, like persecution in general, is inseparable from that social order’ (199).

*Thesis Two.* In the second thesis, Horkheimer and Adorno took recourse to Freud’s *Culture and Its Discontents* as an interpretative device and portrayed antisemitism as a means consciously deployed by the powers that be to channel discontent in a way that did not endanger the existing order. The attractiveness of antisemitism as a popular movement, they argued, lay in the fact that, for its adherents, it was a luxury. To be sure, there had been some pretense that the expropriation of the Jews could benefit the non-Jewish population materially, but nobody genuinely believed this. The actual benefit derived from antisemitism lay in the fact that it signalled an affirmation of the individuals’ rage and destructive urge by the collective. Antisemitism was a luxury because it created a realm in which, for once, individuals were not expected to subordinate their sentiments and desires to considerations of purpose and utility. To the many, it was attractive not although but, rather, precisely because it was ultimately ground- and senseless.

At root, then, antisemitism was an unconscious rebellion against the self-denial, sublimation and rationality the process of civilization had imposed upon humankind. Ultimately, those who blindly lashed out against the Jews were as oblivious to their true motives as were their (Jewish) victims. It is for this reason that antisemitism could serve the powers that be. They deployed antisemitism 'as a distraction, a cheap means of corruption and a terrorist warning'. The 'respectable rackets' (i.e., democratic state capitalism) nurtured it, the 'disrespectable' ones (i.e., fascist state capitalism) practised it (200). Antisemitism was an intrinsic trait of civilization, and one of its rituals. Indeed, contrary to the long-standing libel that Jews engaged in ritual murder, it was the pogroms that were the true ritual murders.

The various political and economic arguments articulated by antisemites were no more than half-hearted rationalizations. Given that neither they nor their victims actually understood their motives, there could be no such thing as genuine antisemitism (in the sense of a substantiated conviction).<sup>23</sup> Hence, Horkheimer and Adorno reasoned rather troublingly, not only the victim groups but also the roles of murderer and victim were, in principle, interchangeable. All that was required for a group to be suitable as a victim group was that it stood out in some way and that it was defenceless. 'The adults for whom baying for Jewish blood has become second nature are just as clueless' as to their reasons for doing so 'as is the youth expected to spill it' (200–1). The powers that be, however, who commissioned the antisemitism and who did know why, 'neither hate the Jews nor do they love their followers' (201). The latter, whose pursuit of their economic and sexual interests was curtailed by the ruling order, could at least give free rein to their hatred (of the Jews). Given that this hatred was in fact displaced, it obviously could never soothe the itch that was actually making them act out and was therefore potentially boundless.

In what sense did the Jews stand out as a defenceless group? Where Jewish emancipation had occurred, the Jews were easily identifiable as the beneficiaries of political liberalism. Yet for the majority of the population, the liberal promise of universal human rights, of happiness even for those who held no power, remained an unattainable ideal and it struck them as a lie and a mockery. Forced to forego the benefits of the liberal promise themselves, they turned on those who did benefit from it. Indeed, wherever they saw a flicker of any of the hopes, desires and urges they were forced to suppress in themselves, they increasingly felt the need to annihilate that flicker.

*Thesis Three.* In the third thesis, Horkheimer and Adorno discussed the issue of the Jews' association with the sphere of circulation and its relevance in explaining (bourgeois) antisemitism. Their line of argument was remarkably close to that of Karl Marx in the second part of 'Zur Judenfrage'. The materialism and hunger for profit of which the Jews were being accused was in fact an integral trait of society as a whole, whose members sought to dissociate themselves from this trait by pointing to the Jews as the supposedly sole representatives of qualities that had in fact come to dominate society in its entirety.

This was not just a propaganda trick. Rather, the Jews had genuinely been placed in a position that made them the visible representatives of capitalist exploitation. Workers were directly confronted with their exploitation not when they received their wages but when they found out how little they could get for those wages; not, in other words, in their dealings with their employers, but when they came face to face with the shop keepers. It was they who acted as 'the bailiff for the system as a whole and took on the odium' of capitalism *pars pro toto* (204). To be sure, Jews were never exclusively responsible for the sphere of circulation, but they had been 'trapped in it for too long for their character not to reflect the hatred they have always had to bear' (204).<sup>24</sup>

Thus far, Horkheimer and Adorno stayed within the frame of reference outlined in the previous thesis. The notion that traces of the wounds inflicted upon the Jews in the past would provoke further aggression from the descendants of the perpetrators is entirely plausible. Yet their line of argument then began to stray disconcertingly towards an actual (rather than an ascribed or projected) identification of the Jews with the sphere of circulation. 'The Jews were colonizers of progress', they contended, 'they carried capitalist forms of existence from country to country and attracted the hatred of those who had to bear the cost of progress. Due to the economic progress that is now their undoing, the Jews have always been a thorn in the side of the artisans and peasants whose status capitalism hollowed out' (204). In truth, they had always continued to be court Jews, even in the age of emancipation, protected by the powers that be only when it served their purposes. The legal equality they had supposedly gained was never more than a privilege that could be, and now was being, revoked again. The transformation to state capitalism rendered the sphere of circulation obsolete, hence the Jews now fell prey to the very progress whose pioneers they had been for so long.

Horkheimer and Adorno did not succeed in formulating this thesis in a genuinely coherent manner. In this respect too, the parallels to 'Zur Judenfrage' are apparent. Like Marx, they blur the line between a critique of the way in which certain traits are commonly identified as supposedly Jewish and participation in that very practice, and they too seem to be too invested in the latter to leave the reader feeling entirely comfortable. By way of a rationalization one might perhaps suggest that these difficulties arose because Horkheimer and Adorno failed to draw a clear enough distinction between historical reasons that explain why the Jews were considered a suitable foil for antisemitic projections, on the one hand, and the contemporary content of those projections, on the other. Yet this rationalization alone cannot

fully explain away Horkheimer and Adorno's relapse behind their own previously articulated insights into the projective nature of antisemitism.

*Thesis Four.* In the fourth thesis, Horkheimer and Adorno turned to the dis/continuities between Christian anti-Judaism and modern antisemitism, a contentious issue among scholars of antisemitism to this day.<sup>25</sup> Given their understanding of the historical evolution of antisemitism as a cumulative process, they were able to offer a more differentiated analysis of this issue than most of their peers – and, indeed, than much of the relevant scholarship since. They proceeded in two steps, explaining first why religious tradition, perhaps counter-intuitively, was still relevant, and then identifying what they considered the principal cause of the anti-Jewish animus within that tradition.

As they pointed out, organized political antisemitism, for the most part, had expressly sought to shift the emphasis away from the religious to national and racial distinctions between Jews and non-Jews. This, they argued, simply reflected the decreasing influence of religion in society: 'Criticizing the Jews for being obdurate nonbelievers no longer sets the masses in motion', they wrote (205). It is noteworthy, then, that Horkheimer and Adorno's reasoning regarding the continued influence of Christian anti-Judaism was developed, not in opposition to, but against the backdrop of the assumptions about secularization widely accepted until the 1980s. Horkheimer and Adorno suggested that the argument needed to be turned from its head onto its feet. The antisemitic ideologues protested too much, indicating just how deeply religious tradition was in fact still ingrained in their ideology. Far from simply being left behind, religion had been transformed into society's 'cultural heritage', and the 'alliance between enlightenment and power'; in other words, its turn from a dialectical and critical to a functional and affirmative force made society oblivious to the true roots of this cultural heritage (206). The yearning and discipleship previously realized in the religious

sphere now found its outlet in the political sphere and directly benefited fascism, not only by helping to create its blindly obedient followers but also insofar as the only content of Christianity that survived this transformation was rabid hatred of the nonbelievers.

Horkheimer and Adorno then moved on to draw the following distinction between Biblical Judaism and Christianity. Understood as a deity capable of subordinating nature, the Jewish god was necessarily abstract and distant. His ineffable power and magnificence was comforting and frightening in equal measure, and the contrast between humankind and god remained absolute, much as god's covenant with the people of Israel and the messianic promise served to mitigate it. Jews, individually and collectively, were expected to lead their lives in accordance with the religious laws but insofar as the Jewish god was both omnipotent and just, the issue of salvation clearly lay exclusively in god's hands and, as such, remained uncertain.

Christianity, by contrast, with its trope of god becoming man in Jesus Christ, had diminished the distinction between god and humankind, suggesting that his majesty was dwarfed by his love for humankind, thus leading to idolatry as the boundaries between the status quo in this world and the promised world to come became blurred. Consequently, mainstream Christianity had come to promise salvation in the world to come to those who followed its prescriptions in this life without actually being able to vouch for the fact that the promise would be kept. Only the 'paradox Christians ... from Pascal to Lessing and Kierkegaard to Barth' had faced up to this lack of certitude and placed it at the heart of their theology. This had made them both radical and tolerant (209). Yet they were the exception. The rule was that Christians therefore depended on the temporal destitution of those who denied that human beings could foresee their salvation with certainty – i.e., the Jews – to reassure themselves of that very certainty.<sup>26</sup> 'The adherents of the father religion', Horkheimer and Adorno wrote, 'are

hated by those of the son as those who know better' (209). Here, as in a number of other instances, far from taking recourse to the indiscriminate obsession with otherness as such that has become characteristic of post-modern thought, Horkheimer and Adorno were at pains to identify specific motives underlying antisemitism.<sup>27</sup>

*Thesis Five.* In the fifth thesis, Horkheimer and Adorno conceptualized antisemitism as an idiosyncrasy, not in the general sense of an individual trait but in the medical sense of an unusual physical response to a stimulus, essentially like an allergy.<sup>28</sup> The 'emancipation of society from antisemitism' – clearly an allusion to Marx's call for society's emancipation from (its) Jewishness, i.e., those qualities commonly attributed to the Jews that were in fact characteristics of society in general – depended on the ability to reflect critically on the actual causes of this spontaneous negative reaction to Jews (209).

Horkheimer and Adorno argued that this idiosyncrasy was ultimately rooted in the repression of primeval forms of mimesis. By this they meant the sort of spontaneous physical response to danger (not being able to move, the hairs on the back of one's neck standing on end etc.) of which an individual was not fully in command. Originally, the most effective form of protection consisted in trying to become invisible to any potential predator by blending into – i.e., by becoming like – one's immediate environment. Yet the process of civilization had required humankind to develop and internalize such a degree of rational self-control that spontaneous mimesis was now considered anathema. For this very reason, however, it had also become an object of repressed desire.

Consequently, in those who were desperately trying to conform and felt all others should do so too, any indication of deviation from the generally expected levels of sensible self control, any sentiments or forms of behaviour that did not conform entirely to the utilitarian rationality of the existing order, aroused both repulsion and envy, both

the desire to imitate and to stamp them out. Those, in other words, who failed to conform, were seen as taking liberties, as demanding privileges, as undermining the existing order. They were in fact aggressors against all those who were more or less managing to conform, and the latter could not but defend themselves against the transgressors. Consequently, any group whose members already bore the traces of violence directed against them in the past, and who therefore could not 'pass', inevitably attracted new violence. 'The cry of pain of the victim who first called violence by its name, indeed, the mere word that references the victim: Frenchman, negro, Jew, lets them intentionally develop the desperation of the persecuted who have to lash out.... The sheer existence of the other is the outrage' (213).

The emotive energy that political antisemitism harnessed was an idiosyncrasy of this kind. The flipside of the antisemites' hatred of the Jews was their persistent desire to imitate them and delve deeply into the Jews' various alleged vices and depraved traits, which served not only to denounce the Jews but also facilitated the antisemites' titillation by allowing them to engage (alleged) forms of human behaviour that were otherwise taboo. In this sense too, antisemitism offered a licence to celebrate what was otherwise strictly prohibited.

As Horkheimer and Adorno saw it, the Jews, rather than repressing mimesis, had transcended it through their ritual observance, rendering them the ideal foil for the return of the repressed in Christian culture, which, as we saw, depended on the Jews for its self-affirmation anyway. Horkheimer and Adorno emphasized that it had become quite immaterial whether Jews actually still bore the traits associated with them. 'Because they invented the concept of kashrut, they are persecuted as pigs' (216). There is an obvious parallel here to Sartre's reasoning, in the first part of his *Anti-Semite and Jew* (written after the liberation of Majdanek and first published in December 1945) that, 'if the Jew did not exist, the anti-Semite would invent him'.<sup>29</sup>

*Thesis Six.* This affinity becomes all the more pronounced in the sixth and originally final thesis, which is in many ways the most developed. Here Horkheimer and Adorno conceptualized antisemitism as a form of pathic projection, which, they suggested, was the exact opposite of original mimesis. Whereas the latter led the individual to become like their environment, pathic projection recreated the environment wholly in the projecting individual's image.

Horkheimer and Adorno emphasized that all perception of reality was ultimately projection. Following Kant, they argued that all perception is inherently already interpretation, in other words, our perceptions of the reality we encounter are fundamentally shaped by our attempt to make sense of that reality. 'Between the actual object and the indubitable sense datum, between inner and outer, there is a gaping chasm, which the subject must bridge at its own peril. To reflect the thing as it is, the subject must give back to it more than it receives from it' (218). Even so, this is not one-way traffic because the reality of which we seek to make sense also conditions the criteria we apply in interpreting it. 'From the traces the thing leaves behind in its senses the subject recreates its external world, the unity of the thing in its manifold properties and states; and in so doing, it retroactively constitutes its self by learning to impart synthetic unity not only to the external impressions but also to the internal ones, as the latter gradually separate themselves from the former. The identical ego is the most recent constant product of projection' (218–19). Consequently, 'the possibility of reconciliation lies neither in certainty untroubled by thought, nor in a pre-conceptual unity of perception and object, but in reflection upon the antithesis between them. The antithesis transpires within the subject, which has the external world within its own consciousness and yet recognizes it as other. Hence, that reflection, the life of reason, takes place as conscious projection' (219).

The Problem, then, was not projection as such but non-reflective projection. If 'the subject cannot return to the object what it has received from it, it becomes not richer but poorer. It ceases to reflect in both directions: since it no longer reflects the object, it no longer reflects on itself, and thus loses the ability to differentiate.... It runs over and atrophies at the same time. It invests the external world', which is reduced to 'a mere occasion for its delusion ... boundlessly with that which is within' the subject itself. 'The compulsively projecting self ... creates everybody in [its] own image' (219, 220, 222), but it 'can project nothing except its own unhappiness', and its lack of reflection prevents it from identifying the immediate source of that unhappiness even though it in fact resides within the self (222).

Horkheimer and Adorno explicitly sought to underpin their concept of pathic projection with specific psychoanalytic tropes. This attempt seems rather hapless, though, given that it abounds in troubling ways with women who 'adore the unwavering paranoid man' (221), homosexuality as a means of 'assimilating one's conscious emotional life to that of a small girl', 'repressing Sodomites' (222), and 'pent up homosexual aggression' (223).<sup>30</sup> This is not to suggest that repressed homosexuality has no role to play in the conceptualization of antisemitism. Current Muslim antisemitism makes very clear that it does. Even so, the way in which Horkheimer and Adorno try to make sense of this nexus is rather disturbing.

More helpful and topical, perhaps, are their musings about the attractiveness of pathic projection to what they called the 'half-educated', a category they distinguished clearly from the uneducated. The half-educated, they explained, hypostatized their partial knowledge as complete knowledge in a desperate and violent attempt to give meaning to a world that made their existence meaningless, and they railed against intellectual pursuits and experiences from which they were excluded, laying society's

responsibility for their exclusion at the feet not of society but of those who were able to participate. Horkheimer and Adorno went on to complain about the way in which education was increasingly being conceptualized in ever more utilitarian terms, thus becoming antagonistic to emancipation, a complaint that would seem to be more topical than ever and yet, given its apparent timelessness, might also point us to the equally timeless vagaries of cultural pessimism.

Against this backdrop, they also began to touch on a development they would later return to in greater detail in the seventh thesis, namely, the way in which the economic transformation to state capitalism impacted on the psyche of those living in it. As more and more economic and social processes became increasingly automated, they argued, individuals no longer needed to make decisions, negotiate inner turmoil and develop a conscience in order to function efficiently.

Horkheimer and Adorno's discussion of pathic projection, as they themselves emphasized, was largely generic. Taking the thesis in isolation, the question thus remained why pathic projection should be directed specifically against the Jews. Given that this was the sixth thesis, one could make the perfectly reasonable argument that this particular issue had been covered several times already and did not need to be discussed again. Yet Horkheimer and Adorno did return to it, drawing attention once again to the Jews' significance in the sphere of circulation. Under the circumstances they had described, they wrote, it came down to 'chance, steered by the party' on to whom 'the desperate desire for self-preservation projects the responsibility for the terror it experiences'. 'Regardless of what the Jews may actually be like, their image, as something obsolete, bears the traits that totalitarian domination cannot but consider its mortal enemy: happiness without power, reward without work, a homeland without frontiers, religion without myth'. Since these traits were in fact highly desirable but could not be affirmed, there remained

only one way of attaining them: ‘even hatred leads to union with the object – in destruction’ (229).

*Thesis Seven.* The seventh thesis focused principally on what Horkheimer and Adorno called ‘ticket mentality’, i.e., the way in which, as they saw it, whole populations now increasingly subscribed to entire ideological package deals without ever individually going through the process of forming judgements and developing the convictions integral to the respective package deal. They began this thesis with the somewhat counter-intuitive claim that ‘there are no longer any antisemites’ (230). By this they meant not that antisemitism had disappeared but that it had ceased to be an ideology in its own right and instead had become one plank in the fascist package deal. In other words, there were no longer any antisemites in the sense that those who now subscribed to antisemitism did so automatically because it was part of the package deal they had chosen; their antisemitism was in no way based on any sort of involvement with actual Jews or individual thought processes. ‘Alongside the crushing of the trades unions and the crusade against Bolshevism’, they wrote, anyone inclined to ‘give fascism a chance also subscribes to a reckoning with the Jews’ (231).

Yet not only the ticket mentality among fascists, any form of ticket mentality – also among the supporters of progressive causes – was harmful, Horkheimer and Adorno insisted. To their mind, the automation of ideological orientations was part and parcel of the transformation to state capitalism (and the culture industry that emerged with it). As industrial production became serial and dependent on the persistently identical reproduction of one particular stereotype, as it were, so did people’s attempts to make sense of the world. Where previously some level of individuation had been necessary for both workers and entrepreneurs to play their respective roles, in the age of universal planning and automation, the process by which individuals had previously developed

a personal conscience and sense of responsibility appeared simply as an obstacle to efficiency and a waste of time. All that was now required was that individuals readily slotted into the appropriate ideological package deal and subscribed to the judgements it implied without actually engaging in any sort of active judging or choice. They likened Freud’s notion of the human psyche with its complex interaction between the conscious and the unconscious, between id, ego and superego, to the private enterprises characteristic of liberal capitalism prior to its recent transformation. Both were now becoming redundant. Drawing their idea to its logical consequence, Horkheimer and Adorno arrived at the rather paradoxical conclusion that ‘ticket mentality does not become antisemitic merely when the ticket is antisemitic, but any form of ticket mentality is antisemitic’ (238). Indeed, the specificity of antisemitism was largely lost in this thesis.

As we saw, it had increasingly dawned on Horkheimer and Adorno that it was quite irrelevant whether actual Jews really displayed any of the characteristics the antisemites attributed to them. As they now noted, antisemitism had shown its potential to be just as successful in areas without Jews as it was in areas with dense Jewish settlement. Indeed, the extreme demonization of the Jews by the Nazis had taken place only after they had in fact already become economically obsolete. Yet, with this they returned to the trope that tied antisemitism to attitudes towards the sphere of circulation, which they again proceeded to generalize. ‘The administration of totalitarian states that exterminates obsolete sections of the population’, they explained, ‘is merely the executioner who carries out economic sentences long since passed’ (237).<sup>31</sup>

Evidently, then, the Jews were perfectly interchangeable as a target and the hatred directed towards Jews within certain ideological package deals could easily be redirected towards other groups. This very interchangeability, they concluded, offered indubitable

hope that antisemitism would come to an end. Their reasoning at this point seems rather perfunctory and carries little conviction. If I understand it correctly, their line of argument is twofold. As fully automated functioning crowds out all forms of active experience and all encounters with reality, it will also render inaccessible whatever ostensible compensations the existing order may have to offer to those it subjugates. Consequently, as the ticket mentality comes to encompass all walks of life, the groundlessness of its automated reasoning will become so intense, so palpable that anyone who has not lost the ability to think altogether will see truth reflected *ex negativo* in the enormity of its absurdity.

## PERSPECTIVES

The 'Elements of Antisemitism' is a complex, demanding, intentionally fragmentary and genuinely unfinished text. It is also intensely stimulating and richly rewards repeated reading. I have pointed to a number of tensions and ambivalences in the text. It seems highly likely that some of these were unintentional and resulted from the unfinished character of the text. Other tensions, however, Horkheimer and Adorno would surely have considered inevitable. Only if there were a complete identity between concepts and the phenomena they are designed to reflect, would it be possible to come up with a set of theses genuinely capable of neatly combining all conceivable elements of antisemitism in an entirely coherent fashion. Yet Horkheimer and Adorno's critique of instrumental reason hinged precisely on the insistence that concepts and the reality they sought to account for diverged, and that it was in the recognition of this divergence that the potential for subversion resides. Consequently, it is in some ways quite perverse to want to offer a short, apodictic summary of the core assumptions expressed in

the 'Elements of Antisemitism'. So, bridging the 'gaping chasm ... between the actual object and the indubitable sense datum' at my own peril, I would argue that in 'Elements of Antisemitism', tensions and ambivalences in the text notwithstanding, Horkheimer and Adorno established a number of basic criteria for any critical understanding of antisemitism. Among them are (in no particular order) the following closely interrelated assumptions:

- 1 The critical analysis of antisemitism is an indispensable heuristic device for any meaningful critique of capitalism. It therefore has to focus both on the anti-Jewish thrust and the universal implications of antisemitism and cannot be satisfied with an exploration of one to the detriment of the other. The text of 'Elements of Antisemitism' bears witness to the difficulties and tensions this creates.
- 2 Antisemitism is a product of, not an aberration from, the values prevalent in capitalist societies.
- 3 Antisemitism is not primarily a matter of personal attitudes towards Jews but fundamentally a social (and socially mediated) phenomenon.
- 4 Antisemitism is woven into the deep structure of civilization (in the sense in which Freud used the term) and not, for all its manipulative potential, a random impulse that can be summoned at will.
- 5 Antisemitism in any given context needs to be understood as springing from a confluence of long-term continuities and short-term discontinuities; the precise dynamics of that confluence are specific to the individual context.
- 6 Antisemitism is not simply a reflection of a universal and arbitrary desire to engage in othering but, in any given context, draws on specific anti-Jewish as well as other, more generic negative impulses.
- 7 Antisemitism cannot be subsumed as a form of racism. The findings in the section of the Labor Study that compares antisemitism and racism indicate 'a difference in the texture of prejudice'.<sup>32</sup>
- 8 Antisemitism does not reflect actual Jewish/non-Jewish interaction nor even requires the presence of actual Jews.
- 9 The critical analysis of antisemitism depends fundamentally on the ability to distinguish reflective from pathic projection. Epistemology therefore

has a key role to play in the critical conceptualization of antisemitism.

- 10 Antisemites cannot be convinced of the error of their ways by introducing them to actual Jews. The so-called contact hypothesis, in other words, is a fallacy.

The last two points deserve particular attention. Traditional Marxism, to this day, has no epistemological grounding to speak of and its adherents have generally been content with the self-evidently illogical assumption that what one can see must be real. When Lukács – displaying extraordinary genius in reconstructing Marx’s move beyond Hegel without knowing most of the relevant sources that have since come to light – valiantly sought to provide it with one, he was promptly forced to retract it. While it is true that blatant material immiseration can be spotted easily, the fetishes on which the capitalist order hinges would, by definition, not fulfil their functions if they could be spotted with the naked eye. Without putting too fine a point on it, the notion of a direct reflection of reality in human perception would suggest that anybody who only meets nice Jews could never become an antisemite while anybody who meets only unpleasant Jews would be justified in being one; and it would be quite incapable of explaining what happens to people who meet both nice and unpleasant Jews, let alone how people who never meet Jews can be antisemites.

Ziege has suggested that Horkheimer and Adorno’s concept of pathic projection was inspired, not least, by J.F. Brown’s work on the topic.<sup>33</sup> This is an entirely plausible suggestion that underscores her account of the broadening of the Frankfurt School’s horizons in exile and deepens our understanding of Horkheimer and Adorno’s intellectual development in the United States. Even so, they expressly referenced Kant in their discussion of reflective and pathic projection, which is all the more remarkable, given that Kant is subjected to harsh criticism earlier on in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (and elsewhere in their writings). In short, the epistemological

underpinning of the ‘Elements’ is fundamentally rooted in the legacy of German Idealism, which is surely remarkable for a Marxist project.

Reading the ‘Elements’, or Adorno’s contribution to *The Authoritarian Personality*, many readers are likely to be surprised by how strongly many of Horkheimer and Adorno’s observations still resonate, given that these texts were written some 70 years ago. Even so, as they age, it is inevitable that productive appropriations of the texts that view them as more than simply historical will hinge less on their phenomenological observations and more on their conceptual and epistemological underpinnings. Much recent research on the Frankfurt School’s grappling with antisemitism while in exile has focused especially on the intricate nexus between their philosophical reflections, on the one hand, and the major empirical research projects undertaken under their auspices, on the other. This line of inquiry has been immensely rewarding. Ziege’s endeavour, in particular, to establish long-term continuities and discontinuities between their empirical research projects ranging from the final years of the Weimar Republic to the post-war *Group Experiment* back in Germany, understood as a long line of ‘pilot studies’, has added enormous depth to the debate. Yet this perspective also raises a number of new questions that point in the direction of a more thorough exploration of the epistemology of the Frankfurt School’s grappling with antisemitism.

Horkheimer and Adorno’s model of pathic projection also has important implications for possible anti-antisemitic strategies. As Adorno pointed out very clearly in his contribution to the *The Authoritarian Personality*,

There is no simple gap between experience and stereotypy. Stereotypy ... feeds on deep-lying unconscious sources, the distortions which occur are not to be corrected merely by taking a *real* look. Rather, experience itself is predetermined by stereotypy. The persons whose interviews on minority issues have just been discussed share one decisive trait. Even if brought together with

minority group members as different from the stereotype as possible, they will perceive them through the glasses of stereotypy ... Optimism with regard to the hygienic effects of personal contacts should be discarded. One cannot 'correct' stereotypy by experience; he has to reconstitute the capacity for having experiences in order to prevent the growth of ideas which are malignant in the most literal, clinical sense.<sup>34</sup>

Indeed, Adorno suggested, one needs to think very carefully as to how antisemites could be addressed at all in ways that are not ultimately counter-productive. 'As soon as the existence of a "Jewish problem" is admitted', he wrote, 'anti-Semitism has won its first surreptitious victory'.<sup>35</sup> To the extent that current anti-Zionism is, *de facto*, for the most part antisemitic, these are considerations well worth taking seriously in attempts to combat anti-Zionism and the BDS campaign.<sup>36</sup>

Implicitly, the distinction between reflective and pathic projection also underpins Moishe Postone's 'Anti-Semitism and National Socialism', which has been (and continues to be) the foundational text for some of the most productive critical conceptualizations of antisemitism in the tradition of the Frankfurt School since the late 1970s.<sup>37</sup> Postone characterized antisemitism as a fetish based on the assumption that those aspects of capitalism perceived of as being negative and alienating are not innate to capitalism but extraneous to it, and that they represent a contamination of what would otherwise be a wholly benign form of capitalism, a contamination brought about by the Jews. Postone thus built on Horkheimer and Adorno's discussion of the conventional juxtaposition of productive and exploitative capital and fleshed it out, mapping it on to those between perceptions of use- and commodity-value, and between aspects of capitalism experienced as concrete and abstract. Postone interpreted the Shoah as the ultimate rebellion against the tyranny of abstraction and commodity-value. Unmasked as the personification of this tyranny, the Jews were first dispossessed of anything of use-value – from

their possessions to their hair – and then, having been reduced to 'shadows, ciphers, numbered abstractions', annihilated.<sup>38</sup> One might add that many had their gold teeth removed even after that.

Another ultimately epistemological issue raised by Postone and Brick concerns the locus of critique within Horkheimer and Adorno's reckoning with state capitalism and instrumental reason. 'The disjunction of concept and reality' that forms the (potential) locus of subversion in Horkheimer and Adorno's conceptualization of post-liberal capitalism, Postone and Brick argue, 'hovers mysteriously above its object'. It fails, in other words, to identify a 'self-generating "non-identity" intrinsic' to capitalism's 'forms of social relations that do not constitute a stable, unitary whole'.<sup>39</sup> Closely related is the problematic of individual responsibility for sentiments characterized as flowing from necessary false consciousness or socially pervasive fetishes.

I suspect that these questions could be approached in a rather more differentiated and productive manner by integrating psychoanalytic concepts more fully into the argument. Critical theory's appropriation of psychoanalysis doubtless played a critical role in facilitating its originality yet, as Ziege, among others, has pointed out,<sup>40</sup> this appropriation was patchy and uneven. We have yet to benefit fully from the promise that lay in the integration of Marxism and psychoanalysis. Presumably, psychoanalytic concepts could play a crucial role in explaining how antisemitism, as a projection, represents a form of displacement that springs from the complex web of social relations in which antisemites see themselves embroiled without being causally connected to actual social relations between Jews and non-Jews.

## Notes

- 1 Eva-Maria Ziege, *Antisemitismus und Gesellschaftstheorie* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2009), 110, 118 and *passim*.

- 2 See Willem van Reijen and Jan Brausen, 'Das Verschwinden der Klassengeschichte in der "Dialektik der Aufklärung". Ein Kommentar zu den Textvarianten der Buchausgabe von 1947 gegenüber der Erstveröffentlichung von 1944', in Max Horkheimer, *Gesammelte Schriften* vol. 5 (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1987), 453–7.
- 3 Moishe Postone and Barbara Brick, 'Critical Theory and Political Economy', in Seyla Benhabib, Wolfgang Bonß and John McCole (eds.), *On Max Horkheimer* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993), 215–56, here 245–6.
- 4 Theodor W. Adorno, Max Horkheimer, *Briefwechsel* vol 2: 1938–1944 (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2004), 84.
- 5 'Nationalsozialismus und Antisemitismus', in *ibid.*, 539–95, here 541.
- 6 Max Horkheimer, 'Die Juden und Europa', in *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* 8 (1939/40), 115–36, here 115.
- 7 Franz Neumann, copy of letter to Theodor W. Adorno, 14 August 1940, MHA VI 1a 21–3. See also Jack Jacobs, *The Frankfurt School, Jewish Lives, and Antisemitism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 59.
- 8 See Ziege, *Antisemitismus*, 104–8; Postone and Brick, 'Critical Theory', 215–25.
- 9 Ziege, *Antisemitismus*, 107.
- 10 Postone and Brick, 'Critical Theory', 246.
- 11 On the issue of Muslim Antisemitism in contemporary Europe, see Günther Jikeli, *European Muslim Antisemitism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015). For the broader historical and geographical context, see Mark R. Cohen, 'Islam and the Jews: Myth, Counter-Myth, History', in *Jerusalem Quarterly* 33 (1986), 125–37; Jane S. Gerber, 'Anti-Semitism and the Muslim World', in David Berger (ed.), *History and Hate. The Dimensions of Anti-Semitism* (Philadelphia: JPS, 1986), 73–93; Bernard Lewis, 'The Arab World Discovers Antisemitism', in Sander L. Gilman and Steven T. Katz (eds.), *Anti-Semitism in Times of Crisis* (New York: New York University Press, 1991), 343–52; Christoph Nonn, *Antisemitismus* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2008), 105–12; Norman Stillman, 'Anti-Judaism and Antisemitism in the Arab and Islamic World Prior to 1948', in Albert S. Lindemann and Richard S. Levy (eds.), *Antisemitism. A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 212–21.
- 12 Ziege, *Antisemitismus, passim*; Jacobs, *Frankfurt School*, chapter 2.
- 13 Theodor W. Adorno, Gershom Scholem, *Briefwechsel 1939–1969* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2015), 21–2.
- 14 Horkheimer, 'Die Juden und Europa', 136.
- 15 *Ibid.*, 129.
- 16 Gerhard Scheit, 'Horkheimer's "The Jews and Europe" Revisited', in Lars Fischer (ed.), *Dialectic of Enlightenment Turns 70: New Perspectives on Critical Theory and Antisemitism* (forthcoming).
- 17 Adorno, at the time, explicitly expressed his agreement with Horkheimer's text (Horkheimer and Adorno, *Briefwechsel*, vol 2: 57–8).
- 18 Jack Jacobs (*Frankfurt School*, 186, note 142) has pointed to the fact that this passage – widely quoted from Rolf Wiggerhaus, *Die Frankfurter Schule* (Munich: dtv, 1988), 347 – is not in fact contained in the letter eventually sent to Laski on 10 March 1941 (Max Horkheimer, *Gesammelte Schriften* vol. 17 [Frankfurt: Fischer, 1996], 17–18). I am grateful to Rolf Wiggerhaus for clarifying that the passage in fact comes from a draft (email communications 24 November and 5 December 2016) and to Mathias Jehn of the Horkheimer Archive in Frankfurt, who helped identify the draft and sent me a copy (email communications 28 November and 5 December 2016). In the event, Horkheimer and his colleagues obviously decided not to mention their antisemitism project to Laski after all, given that they were already asking him to comment on another research proposal, 'Cultural Aspects of National Socialism'.
- 19 Max Horkheimer, draft letter to Harold Laski, Universitätsbibliothek der Goethe Universität, Frankfurt am Main, Na 1 Nachlass Max Horkheimer, Nr. 31, S. 65r–67r.
- 20 'Elements of Antisemitism' is in fact followed by roughly 50 pages of notes and drafts but it is the final 'finished' section of *Dialectic of Enlightenment*.
- 21 For more details on the text's evolution and authorship, see Gunzelin Schmid Noerr's epilogue in Max Horkheimer, *Gesammelte Schriften* vol. 5, 423–52.
- 22 Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, 'Dialektik der Aufklärung', in Max Horkheimer, *Gesammelte Schriften* vol. 5, 16–238, here 23. Subsequent references to this text will be indicated by page numbers in brackets in the main text.
- 23 This would seem to prefigure their critique of the ticket mentality in the subsequently added seventh thesis.
- 24 Edmund Jephcott, in his translation, has suggested that it was not the Jews but the sphere of circulation that had long been the target of hatred. However, given that the form of the relevant verb is plural [*ertrugen*], it can only refer to the Jews (see Rolf Tiedemann (ed.), Theodor Adorno, *Can One Live after Auschwitz?* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003], 397).
- 25 See Lars Fischer, 'Antisemitism', in Matthew Jafferis (ed.), *Ashgate Research Companion to Imperial Germany* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 143–58, here 143–5.

- 26 There are resonances here of the Augustinian paradigm, i.e., the notion that the survival of the Jews was ordained by god so they could serve as a deterrent, demonstrating what lay in store for those who refused to follow Christ.
- 27 See Gerhard Scheit, *Quälbarer Leib* (Freiburg/Breisgau: ça ira, 2011), 28.
- 28 The term idiosyncrasy does not exist in the German language with the more common meaning it has in English. What Horkheimer and Adorno had in mind is evident from, for example, the following entry in *Brockhaus' Konversations-Lexikon* from 1894: '*Idiosyncrasie* (gr.), a peculiar sensitivity of the organism that hinges not on the strength but the kind of the stimulus. Those affected by experience stimuli differently from those who are healthy. They experience smells that the healthy find repulsive – the smell, say, of burnt feathers or a smouldering wick – as pleasant yet, conversely, find pleasant scents unbearable. Idiosyncrasies affect other senses too (e.g., taste). Some people's deviant behaviour towards certain dishes and beverages also belongs into this context; some people, for instance, regularly break out in hives when they eat strawberries, crayfish or the like' (*Brockhaus' Konversations-Lexikon* vol. 9 [Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1894], p. 512).
- 29 Jean-Paul Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew* (New York: Schocken, 1995), 13.
- 30 On this point, see also Ziege, *Antisemitismus*, 121–2.
- 31 For 'executioner', Horkheimer and Adorno used the antiquated term *Nachrichter* (the more common term would have been *Scharfrichter*). Its first syllable reinforced the sense of a temporal gap between the passing of the sentence and its execution (*nach* = after). At the time, it also had the additional connotation of (military) 'messenger'.
- 32 Universitätsbibliothek der Goethe Universität, Frankfurt am Main, Na 1 Nachlass Max Horkheimer, 679 – 'Antisemitism among American Labor' vol. 2, 496. On this issue see also Lars Fischer, 'A difference in the texture of prejudice'. *Historisch-konzeptionelle Überlegungen zum Verhältnis von Antisemitismus, Rassismus und Gemeinschaft* (Graz: Grazer Universitätsverlag, 2016), 31–40.
- 33 Ziege, *Antisemitismus*, 122–3.
- 34 Theodor W. Adorno, 'Prejudice in the Interview Material', in *idem* et al. (eds.), *The Authoritarian Personality* (New York: Harper, 1950), 603–53, here 617.
- 35 *Ibid.*, 620.
- 36 For the background here, see Meir Litvak and Esther Webman, 'Israel and Antisemitism', in Albert S. Lindemann and Richard S. Levy (eds.), *Antisemitism. A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 237–49; Nonn, *Antisemitismus*, 110–12; Joel S. Fishman, 'The BDS Message of Anti-Zionism, Anti-Semitism, and Incitement to Discrimination', in *Israel Studies* 18, 3 (2012), 412–25; Ira M. Sheskin and Ethan Felson, 'Is the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement Tainted by Anti-Semitism?', in *Geographical Review* 106, 2 (2016), 270–5; Derek J. Penslar, 'Antisemitism and Anti-Zionism: A Historical Approach', in *idem*, Michael R. Marrus and Janice Gross Stein (eds.), *Contemporary Antisemitism. Canada and the World* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 80–95. For an interesting discussion of the attitudes of members of the Frankfurt School towards Israel, see Jacobs, *Frankfurt School*, chapter 3.
- 37 See Fischer, 'A difference in the texture of prejudice', 41–51; Werner Bonefeld, *Critical Theory and the Critique of Political Economy. On Subversion and Negative Reason* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), chapter 9.
- 38 Moishe Postone, 'Anti-Semitism and National Socialism', in Anson Rabinbach and Jack Zipes (eds.), *Germans and Jews Since the Holocaust* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1986), 302–14, here 313.
- 39 Postone and Brick, 'Critical Theory', 243, 230.
- 40 Ziege, *Antisemitismus*, 120.