



PALGRAVE CRITICAL STUDIES OF
ANTISEMITISM AND RACISM



Antisemitism Without Jews in Germany, France and the U.S.

Phantom Enemies

William I. Brustein · Luke Gramith

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Palgrave Critical Studies of Antisemitism
and Racism

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction: Phantom Enemies: Antisemitism Without Jews, Germany, France, and the U.S.

In studies of prejudice much has been published on intolerance toward minorities when the majority and minority population have direct contact. According to this line of thinking, ethnic groups in proximity to one another may see themselves competing for scarce resources resulting in perceived suspicion or hostility rather than in tolerance to each other.¹ However, there is scant literature examining racial, ethnic, or religious discrimination when the majority and minority have no history of engagement. Both past and present instances of this occurrence abound. One contemporary example of this kind of prejudice is the heightened levels of

¹Herbert Blumer, “Race Prejudice as a Sense of Group Position.” *The Pacific Sociological Review*, 1 (1) 1958: 3–7; Hubert M. Blalock, *Toward a Theory of Minority-group Relations*, New York: Wiley, 1967; Lawrence Bobo and Vincent L. Hutchings, “Perceptions of Racial Group Competition: Extending Blumer’s Theory of Group Position to a Multiracial Social Context.” *American Sociological Review*, 61, (6), 1996: 951–972; Jeffrey S. Kopstein and Jason Wittenberg, *Intimate Violence: Anti-Jewish Pogroms on the Eve of the Holocaust*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018; Julia Buyskykh, “Forgive, Forget or Feign: Everyday Diplomacy in Local Communities of Polish Subcarpathia.” *Journal of Global Catholicism*, 2 (2) 2018: 55–87; Omer Bartov and Eric D. Weitz, *Shatterzone of Empires: Coexistence and Violence in the German, Habsburg, Russian, and Ottoman Borderlands*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013. Interestingly, Buyskykh, Bartov, and Weitz focus on instances of coexistence as well as conflict among various ethnic groups engaged in daily contact within a multicultural neighborhood.

Islamophobia (antipathy toward Muslims) in Eastern Europe where Muslim communities are virtually nonexistent.² Another recent case of this phenomenon is the 2018 heated controversy in the remote town of Homer, Alaska, where angry citizens voted down a city council proposal to permit Latin American and Middle Eastern immigrants to settle in Homer. Those who spoke in opposition to the proposal exhibited distinct anti-immigrant and anti-refugee sentiments. The irony is that among these same citizens none could recall ever having encountered a refugee or immigrant in Homer.³

Our project focuses on the presence of antisemitism—arguably the most enduring and ubiquitous form of prejudice. Why antisemitism? As William Brustein has argued, what makes “anti-Semitism different from other forms of xenophobia or dislike of minorities is that Jew hatred is more multifaceted than other kinds of prejudice. White prejudice against blacks typically embraced a racial form of dislike; persecution of Armenians and Greeks in the former Asia Minor usually revolved around economic fears; and antipathy toward Irish-Catholics or Italian-Catholics in the nineteenth-century United States largely took a form of religious hatred. Popular anti-Semitism, by contrast, incorporated religious, racial, economic, and political prejudice.” Brustein notes further that hostility to Jews emanates/emanated from dislike and fear “for their religious beliefs and attitudes, their alleged racial characteristics, their perceived economic behavior and economic power, and their assumed leadership or support of subversive political and social movements. That anti-Semitism embodied numerous manifestations may help to explain why Jews rather than other minorities were frequently sought out as scapegoats or useful targets during periods of both worldwide and national difficulties.”⁴

With respect to historical studies of antisemitism, most have tended to focus on areas with relatively large Jewish communities, positing real

²Zan Strabac and Ola Listhaug. “Anti-Muslim prejudice in Europe: A Multi-level Analysis of Survey Data from 30 Countries.” *Social Science Research*, 37 (1) 2008: 268–286; Gert Pickel and Cemal Öztürk. “Islamophobia Without Muslims? The ‘Contact Hypothesis’ as an Explanation for Anti-Muslim Attitudes—Eastern European Societies in a Comparative Perspective.” *Journal of Nationalism, Memory & Language Politics*, vol. 1, (2), 2018: 162–191.

³Podcast: July 21, 2017, “Fear and Loathing in Homer and Rockville.” <https://www.thisamericalife.org/621/fear-and-loathing-in-homer-and-rockville>.

⁴William I. Brustein, *Roots of Hate: Anti-Semitism in Europe before the Holocaust* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 44–45.

contact and economic competition as the root of antisemitism. Not surprisingly, these studies have found that the highest levels of pre-World War II antisemitism occurred in countries/communities like Poland, Germany, Russia, Hungary, Austria, and Romania with relatively large Jewish populations.⁵ For our study, we concentrate on antisemitism where the majority non-Jewish population has had little or no engagement with the minority Jewish population. Historical examples of antisemitism in countries and regions where Jews were largely absent are numerous including the innumerable religious texts and weekly church sermons in Denmark and Sweden propagating anti-Jewish myths between 1300 and 1600; English popular resistance to Oliver Cromwell's (failed) attempt to bring back the Jews after nearly 400 years since expulsion from England; the successful electoral campaigns of the Canadian Social Credit Party's openly antisemitic Norman Jacques during the 1930s and 1940s in Alberta province; the purges and campaigns against purported "cosmopolitan" and Zionist Jews within a number of communist-dominated Eastern Europe nations during the 1950s and 1960s; the popularity of the notorious "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" and other virulently antisemitic best-selling books authored by Uno Masami in Japan during the 1980s and 1990s; and the 1991 Polish national elections where so-called Jewish influence served as a chief campaign issue for the nationalistic right, the Solidarity movement, and post-Communist groups. In each of these instances, Jews, while not physically present, served as useful scapegoats for the perceived grievances of the community.⁶

⁵The literature here is vast including prominent contributions by Léon Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth: A History of Racist and Nationalist Ideas in Europe*, trans. Edmund Howard, New York: Basic Books, 1971; Jacob Katz, *From Prejudice to Destruction: Anti-Semitism, 1700–1933* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980); Robert S. Wistrich, *Antisemitism: The Longest Hatred* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1991).

⁶*Antisemitism in the North: History and State of Research*. Jonathan Adams and Cordelia Hess, eds., Berlin and Boston: DeGruyter, 2019; Bernard Glassman, *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes without Jews: Images of the Jews in England, 1290–1700* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1975); Howard Palmer, "Politics, Religion and Antisemitism in Alberta, 1880–1950," in *Antisemitism in Canada: History and Interpretations* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1992), 167–196; Paul Lendvai, *Anti-Semitism Without Jews: Communist Eastern Europe* (Garden City, N.J.: Doubleday, 1971); Michael Checinski, *Poland: Communism, Nationalism, Anti-Semitism* (New York: Karz-Cohl, 1982); Rotem Kowner, "The *Protocols* in a Land without Jews: A Reconsideration," *Anti-Semitism International*, 3–4 (2006): 66–67; Wolfgang Benz, "Traditional and Rediscovered Prejudices in the New Europe: Antisemitism, Xenophobia, Discrimination against Minorities," *Patterns of Prejudice* 27 (1993): 3–13.

Our study will focus on antipathy toward Jews—expressed through successful electoral campaigns where a candidate or political party championed antisemitism—in communities located in three different nations where the Jewish population had virtually no history of interaction with the resident majority population of non-Jews. Our cases are the election of antisemitic deputies in the 1893 German Reichstag Elections from the Kingdom of Saxony, the election of a slate of antisemitic deputies to the French Chamber in 1898 from the southwestern French department of the Gers, and the significant proportion of votes for the antisemitic campaign of Gerald B. Winrod in the U.S. Senate Republican Party primary election in 1938 in Kansas. Each of these examples illustrates the existence of heightened levels of antisemitism in cases where few, if any, Jews had engagement with the majority population.

To make sense of the phenomenon of antisemitism without Jews, we draw on the contributions of several prominent social scientists whose work, while not exclusively focusing on antisemitism without Jews, provides useful avenues to explain our three cases. Gavin Langmuir distinguishes between xenophobia and chimeric assertions to explain in-group hostility toward an out-group when there is minimal engagement. Xenophobia is at work, according to Langmuir, when hostility by the in-group toward the out-group is based on what Langmuir refers to as the “kernel of truth.” That is, some of the members of the out-group have exhibited the stigmatized behavior/characteristics or involved themselves in the threatening event. Members of the in-group then extrapolate the alleged untoward actions of those few members of the out-group to the entire out-group. On the other hand, chimeric assertions are negative fantasies or figments of the imagination held by members of the in-group toward the out-group with no basis in reality. Chimeric assertions have no “kernel of truth” and have been employed by antisemites accusing Jews of ritual murder, poisoning of wells during the Black Plague, or seeking to rule the world.⁷

⁷Gavin Langmuir, “Toward a Definition of Antisemitism,” in *The Persisting Question: Sociological Perspectives and Social Contexts of Modern Antisemitism*, ed. Helen Fein (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1987), 86–127. Also, Rotem Kowner speculates that the popularity of antisemitic writings in Japan during the 1980s and 1990s was partly attributed to the belief of a Jewish conspiracy to dominate the world and conquer Japan. The Japanese Jewish population at this time was roughly 1000 inhabitants (“On Ignorance, Respect and Suspicion: Current Japanese Attitudes Toward Jews.” *Analysis of Current Trends in Antisemitism*. Acta no.11. The Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University, 1997), 1–39).

For Helen Fein, antisemitism has traditionally surfaced as a means of political mobilization by the host population at times of political and economic crises—junctures characterized frequently by significant downward mobility and status threats experienced by members of the host population. In Fein’s conceptualization, we can envision how Jews serve as a convenient scapegoat for those experiencing falling social status whether Jews are physically present or absent in one’s community.⁸ Take, for example, the uptick in antisemitism during and after the periodic economic reversals of 1873, 1882, 1893, 1920–1921 and during the Great Depression commencing in 1929. At these moments, attention focused on the alleged negative role that wealthy Jewish banking houses (e.g., Rothschild) had played in the creation of the economic crises. In the industrial age, with multinational financial houses managing international capital flows and stock transactions in ways not seen in earlier epochs, the physical presence of Jews was no longer a necessary requisite for economic chaos, at least in the minds of many antisemites. The 1873 Depression, commonly referred to as the first of these global economic disruptions, unlocked a wave of resentment against the free-market policies of the 1850s and 1860s—policies that had become associated with Jewish banking interests.⁹ The 1873 Depression also unleashed public displeasure because of the series of accompanying stock market collapses and bank failures in which several prominent Jews had played a role.

⁸ Helen Fein, “Explanations of the Origin and Evolution of Antisemitism,” in *The Persisting Question: Sociological Perspectives and Social Contexts of Modern Antisemitism*, ed. Helen Fein (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1987): 3–22. For additional examples of employing Jews (in many instances fantasized Jews) as convenient scapegoats for those confronting relative social and/or economic deprivation see Bernd Marin, “A Post-Holocaust ‘Anti-Semitism Without Anti-Semites’? Austria as a Case in Point.” *Political Psychology*, vol. 2, no. 2 1980: 57–74; Michal Bilewicz and Ireneusz Krzeminski, “Anti-Semitism in Poland and Ukraine: The Belief in Jewish Control as a Mechanism of Scapegoating.” *International Journal of Conflict and Violence*, 4 (2), 2010: 234–243 and Ayal Feinberg, “Explaining Ethnoreligious Minority Targeting: Variations in U.S. Anti-Semitic Incidents.” *Perspectives on Politics*, 18 (3), 2020: 770–787.

⁹ Hans Rogger and Stefan Rohrbacher point to the relationship between economic downturns and the scapegoating of vulnerable minorities. For Rogger and Rohrbacher Jews serve as a likely target for non-Jews at times of economic hard times given the common association of Jews with markets and capitalism in the minds of non-Jews (Hans Rogger, “Conclusion and Overview” in John D. Klier and Shlomo Lambrozo (eds.), *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russian History*, [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992]: 314–372; Stefan Rohrbacher, *Gewalt im Biedermeier: Antijüdische Ausschreitungen in Vormärz und Revolution (1815–1848/49)*, Frankfurt and New York: Campus Verlag, 1993).

In a similar vein to Fein's thesis, Ruth Wodak cites the existence of a long-standing antisemitic worldview which she refers to as 'Judeus ex machina'—"a mechanism that allows blaming an imagined homogeneous collective of Jews for whatever issue might seem opportune for political ends." A recent case in point for Wodak is the 2008 major financial crisis with the charge that responsibility for the financial disaster rested with an alleged global conspiracy of powerful and greedy Jews.¹⁰

Social scientists have long cited the hypervisibility of a minority group threat to the majority group as a factor driving prejudice—most notably, where there is minimal interaction between the majority and minority groups. For Gordon Allport, in his study of black-white relations, the lack of contact between blacks and whites leads to the perception of numerical inflation of the number of blacks and thus to instances where whites view the black population as larger and more menacing.¹¹ Charles Gallagher, building on Allport's research, adds that disproportionately negative media images of the minority group augment the hypervisibility of the minority group threat.¹² Gallagher's assertion dovetails neatly with Herbert Blumer's thinking that the hypervisibility of the minority group threat has greater resonance during critical discourse moments or trigger-events (e.g., Dreyfus Affair, 1965, Watts riots) when the media, the popular culture industry, and opinion makers are able to manufacture a "collective image" of the alleged nefarious role of the minority group in these events.¹³

The xenophobia/chimera dichotomy, the convenient scapegoat role, as well as the hypervisibility and prevalence of negative stereotypes thesis undoubtedly help us to understand hostility toward the Jewish minority where there is little or no engagement with the non-Jewish population. But what are we to make of cases where antisemitic hostility appears to vary significantly in neighboring communities equally characterized by an absence of Jews as well as exposure to negative stereotypical portrayals of

¹⁰Ruth Wodak, "The Radical Right and Antisemitism" in Jens Rydgren (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Radical Right*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, April 2018:1–33.

¹¹Gordon Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* (New York: Addison Wesley, {1954}, 1979).

¹²Charles A. Gallagher, "Miscounting Race: Explaining Whites' Misperceptions of Racial Group Size." *Sociological Perspectives*, 46, 3, 2003: 381–396.

¹³Herbert Blumer, "Race Prejudice as a Sense of Group Position" in Charles A. Gallagher (ed.), *Rethinking the Color Line: Readings in Race and Ethnicity*, 5th edition (New York: McGraw Hill, 2012): 117–122.

Jews? By way of illustration, within the department of Gers in May 1898, the virulently antisemitic Joseph Lasies commanded a clear majority of votes (69%) from the rural cantons (counties) of Bas-Armagnac in his two-candidate race but lost by a large margin (38% to 62%) in the neighboring cantons of Tenarèze and Condomois. Why do Jews serve as convenient scapegoats in one set of counties but not in others?

Our study will examine such instances of divergent support for antisemitism in relatively similar communities in pursuit of a more finely tuned understanding of anti-Jewish prejudice where the majority population has little or no engagement with Jews. We will argue that central to any explanation of regional variation in antisemitic prejudice in communities marked by the absence of Jews is the hypervisibility of a perceived Jewish threat to the material interests of the majority population where Jews are perceived as chimeric danger or, in other words, where an external enemy (i.e., Jews) is deemed as the cause of local misfortune.

More specifically, we will argue that in the Kingdom of Saxony, the department of Gers, and in the state of Kansas, it was precisely divergent economic experiences based on distinct forms of economic activity that determined initial receptivity to the grievance discourses later invested with antisemitic content. The momentum attained by antisemitic discourses varied across space and yielded wildly different ideological and political outcomes. This included differences within the same social classes (e.g., peasants and cottagers), whose experiences manifested differently across zones. The study thus revises common class-reductive approaches that explain political antisemitism with reference to class as such, rather than how particular classes existed within regionally defined economic systems.

For each of our three countries, we select two relatively similar rural regions where in one the message of antisemitism resonated at high levels, while in the other the antisemitic utterances fell flat. The value of selecting rather similar communities with divergent responses to antisemitism will help us locate how and why prejudicial messaging works among some populations but not others. We are seeking common threads from these studies to test theories about prejudice where a targeted minority population is absent as well as to develop a new theory of the phenomenon of antipathy where the targeted population has no history of presence or interaction with the host population.



Germany: The 1893 Reichstag Election in Eastern Saxony

Historians have long recognized the 1893 Reichstag election as a pivotal moment in German history, typified by, among other things, an increasing role of antisemitism in political life and a surge in the German right.¹ Occurring the year after the timeworn German Conservative Party (DKP) made explicit in its new Tivoli Program the formerly coded message that defending Christianity, monarchy, and Germandom required addressing the “Jewish Question,” the election swept tens of antisemitic Conservatives into office. Joining them were 16 delegates from newborn antisemitic parties that embraced a mass-agitational style

¹ Richard S. Levy, *The Downfall of the Anti-Semitic Political Parties in Imperial Germany* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1975), 90; Jonathan Sperber, *The Kaiser's Voters: Electors and Elections in Imperial Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 212–217. See also Brett Fairbairn, *Democracy in the Undemocratic State: The German Reichstag Elections of 1898 and 1903* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997); Matthias Piefel, *Antisemitismus und völkische Bewegung im Königreich Sachsen, 1879–1914* (Göttingen: V & R Unipress, 2004); James Retallack, *The German Right, 1860–1920: Political Limits of the Authoritarian Imagination* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006); James Retallack, *Red Saxony: Election Battles and the Spectre of Democracy in Germany, 1860–1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2017); Stefan Scheil, *Die Entwicklung des politischen Antisemitismus in Deutschland zwischen 1881 und 1992: eine wahlgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1999).

and foregrounded their antisemitism even more forcefully.² Given such events, to call Germany's 1893 legislative election the "Antisemitic Reichstag Election" would be no overstatement.

Nowhere was this antisemitic surge more notable than in the Kingdom of Saxony. Born in the early Napoleonic Era from the remains of the Holy Roman Empire's Electorate of Saxony, the kingdom and its ruling House of Wettin could lay claim to being the historic guarantors of the Protestant Reformation. The Wettins had sheltered Martin Luther in Wittenberg in 1517, shielding him from both popes and emperors. Though the monarchy's alignment with Napoleon some three centuries later left Saxony stripped of Wittenberg and nearly half its territory, the kingdom survived as a sovereign state for much of the nineteenth century thanks to its early industrialization and skillful diplomacy. Until the unexpected Habsburg defeat in the Austro-Prussian War of 1866, the Wettins had sided with Catholic Austria in opposing the growing strength of the northern Prussians. With Austria's catastrophic defeat and the subsequent Prussian victory in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871, however, Saxony joined the Prussian-dominated German Empire as one of the empire's several semi-sovereign constituent states.

Two decades later, Saxony emerged on the cutting edge of the German Right's embrace of political antisemitism, and it played an outsized role in winning Reichstag seats for the emerging antisemitic fraction. The state's leading Conservative, Baron Heinrich von Friesen-Rötha, overcame his party's traditional disdain for a mass-agitational political style³ and built alliances with fledgling antisemitic parties that included Max Liebermann von Sonnenberg and Theodor Fritsch's German-Social Party in Saxony's west and Oswald Zimmerman's German Reform Party in its east.⁴ In the west, where the German-Socials effectively subordinated themselves to

²Nationally, the right jumped from 14% (1890) of the vote to 17% (1893), though only 15% of the right bloc consisted of explicitly antisemitic parties. The votes for new mass-agitational (and even racist) antisemitic parties jumped from 50,000 to 270,000, often at the expense of more traditional rightists like the Free Conservatives (*Reichspartei*). Jonathan Sperber thus concludes that "just about the entire increase in the right-wing vote was due to the aggressive, oppositional, racist campaign mounted by the anti-Semites." Sperber, *The Kaiser's Voters*, 217. See also Piefel, *Antisemitismus und völkische Bewegung*, 93–95; Retallack, *The German Right*, 298–300; James Retallack, *Germany's Second Reich: Portraits and Pathways* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), 247–248; Shulamit Volkov, "Antisemitism as a Cultural Code: Reflections on the History and Historiography of Antisemitism in Imperial Germany," *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* 23 (1978): 25–46.

³Retallack, *The German Right*, 276.

⁴On these parties and the background, see Retallack, *The German Right*, 298–300; Retallack, *Red Saxony*, 209–211, 214, 218–219, 226–227; Piefel, *Antisemitismus und völkische Bewegung*, 73–79.

Conservatives as junior cartel partners, the DKP took several seats in 1893. In the east, the Conservatives supported Zimmermann's Reformers, who achieved a shocking electoral breakthrough, winning six of eight districts in which the party had planned to compete.⁵ Though Saxon politics of the 1890s are often associated with the rise of "Red Saxony" and the left-wing Social-Democratic Party of Germany (SPD)—the SPD gained over 42% of Saxon votes in the 1890 Reichstag election⁶—as elsewhere, the triumph of the antisemites was the story of 1893.

Scholars have long recognized the antisemites' electoral breakthrough in eastern Saxony as particularly striking,⁷ but statistically derived typologies that rely on national averages offer poor explanations of regional results⁸ and reflect a broader tendency to pay too little attention to how and why antisemitism took on varying degrees of intensity and political importance in different areas. Saxon-specific studies have tended to focus on areas with relatively large Jewish communities, positing real contact and economic competition as the root of Saxon antisemitism.⁹ Yet such studies overlook a crucial fact: it was not in areas with large Jewish communities that the Saxon antisemites had their greatest success. That came instead in the historically Conservative electoral district (*Wahlkreis*) of

⁵ Kaiserlichen Statistischen Amt, *Vierteljahreshefte zur Statistik des Deutschen Reichs: 1893*, vol. 4 (Berlin: Puttkammer & Mühlbrecht, 1893), 2–3, 40–42.

⁶ Retallack, *Red Saxony*, 231–235.

⁷ Levy, *Downfall of the Anti-Semitic Political Parties*, 90, 99.

⁸ For example, Brett Fairbairn has constructed an eight-part typology of towns based on urbanization, confessional makeup, and degree of regional particularism. In his typology, the highly antisemitic Bautzen-Kamenz electoral district falls within a category for which the national average for antisemitic voting was roughly 5%, *less than one-tenth* of the votes received by the Reform Party alone in Bautzen-Kamenz in 1893. By contrast, the two electoral districts of Zittau and Löbau, sharing a classification in Fairbairn's assessment due to shared religious and urbanization rates, defy his prediction of equal likelihood of political antisemitism and instead show strikingly different rates of antisemitic voting. Moreover, Fairbairn's claim that voting for radical antisemitic parties tended to occur in areas that were not Conservative strongholds does not apply to Bautzen-Kamenz. Fairbairn, *Democracy in the Undemocratic State*, 127–130. Scheil has emphasized a list of "nots" to describe areas in which radical antisemitic parties were most likely to succeed: not Catholic, not home to regional particularism, and not *kleinstädtisch* (possessing a majority of the population in towns of 2000–10,000 inhabitants). None of the three east-Saxon electoral districts considered in this chapter was *kleinstädtisch*, yet there was significant variance in antisemitic voting, Scheil, *Die Entwicklung des politischen Antisemitismus*, 268–270.

⁹ Piefel writes that "a perspective that focuses on the entire kingdom does not bear fruit [in explaining Saxon antisemitism]: it was Dresden, Chemnitz and Leipzig, where anti-Semitism first mobilized its followers. The vast majority of Jews resided in these cities and here the perception of them was different." Piefel, *Antisemitismus und völkische Bewegung*, 173–176. See also Retallack, *Red Saxony*, 201–202, 206.

Bautzen-Kamenz, the westernmost electoral district within Saxony's easternmost Province (*Kreishauptmannschaft*) of Bautzen (Map 2.1).¹⁰ In that district, voters swept Heinrich Gräfe, fervent Reformer and owner of an artificial flower factory, into office with a first-round majority (51.4%). It was an achievement matched by no other Reformer. Moreover, the Bischofswerda native won even *while* facing a rival antisemitic challenger, the Conservative Ferdinand Graf zur Lippe, who finished a distant second (27.7%).¹¹ When all was said and done, eight in ten Bautzen-Kamenz voters had cast first-round ballots for a virulent antisemite (Table 2.1).

Yet, for all the success of antisemites in Bautzen-Kamenz, results differed greatly a short distance to the east. In neighboring Löbau district, a historical stronghold of Left- and National Liberals,¹² Oswald Zimmermann himself stood for election at the head of a Reform-Conservative coalition. However, the Reform leader earned just 37.0% of first-round votes, a figure nearly identical to the average antisemitic vote share across Saxony.¹³ Though he was the most popular first-round choice in Löbau, he secured a mere 43.8% of the vote in the subsequent run-off.¹⁴ His greatest strength came in Löbau's north and west—in precincts adjacent to Bautzen-Kamenz—but the southern precincts proved inhospitable (Maps 2.2 and 2.3). Perhaps the internal variance within Löbau should not surprise. In Zittau electoral district, abutting Löbau to the southeast, the antisemites failed even to run a candidate. Despite the Reform Party's April 1893 announcement that it would contest the district, Reformers and Conservatives scrapped their seemingly doomed plan before voting began (Table 2.1).¹⁵

The data thus reveal a Bautzen Province that can be divided into distinct high- and low-antisemitism zones, though such zones do not coincide neatly with electoral or administrative district boundaries. What might be called the “northwesterly voting zone,” the area consisting of Bautzen-Kamenz electoral district and the western and northern extents of Löbau

¹⁰Fritz Specht, *Die Reichstagswahlen von 1867 bis 1897: Eine Statistik der Reichstagswahlen nebst den Programmen der Parteien und dem Verzeichniss der Gewählten Kandidaten* (Berlin: Carl Heymanns Verlag, 1898), 287–288.

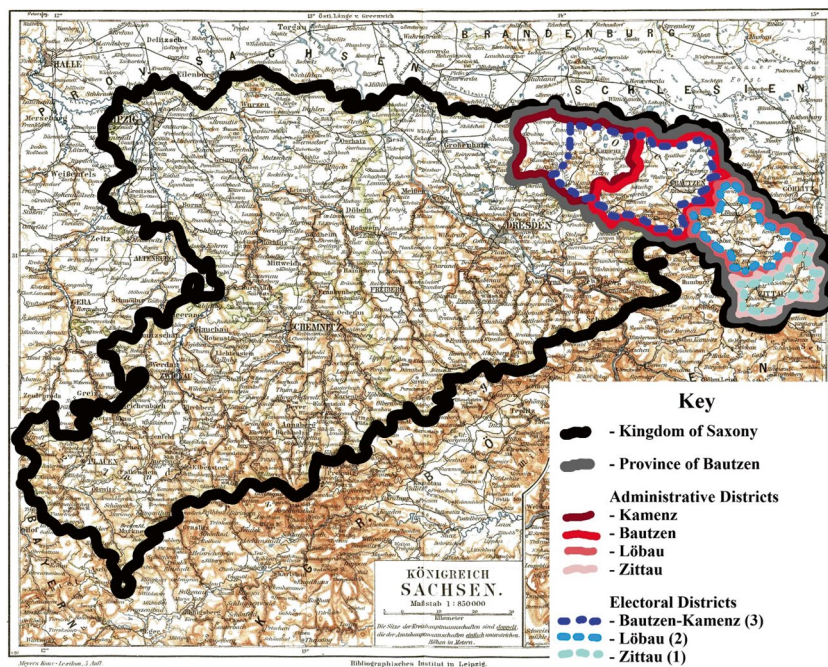
¹¹Kaiserlichen Statistischen Amt, *Vierteljahreshefte zur Statistik: 1893*, vol. 4, 40–42; *Kamener Zeitung*, 4 June 1893.

¹²Specht, *Die Reichstagswahlen von 1867 bis 1897*, 286–287.

¹³All told, some 37.2% of Saxon voters casted first-round ballots for explicitly antisemitic parties, 21.4% for the DKP and 15.8% combined for the German-Social and Reform Parties. Levy, *Downfall of the Anti-Semitic Political Parties*, 90. On the DKP-Reform alliance in Löbau, see Piefel, *Antisemitismus und völkische Bewegung*, 108–109.

¹⁴Kaiserlichen Statistischen Amt, *Vierteljahreshefte zur Statistik: 1893*, vol. 4, 40–42.

¹⁵*Deutsche Wacht*, 16 April 1893.



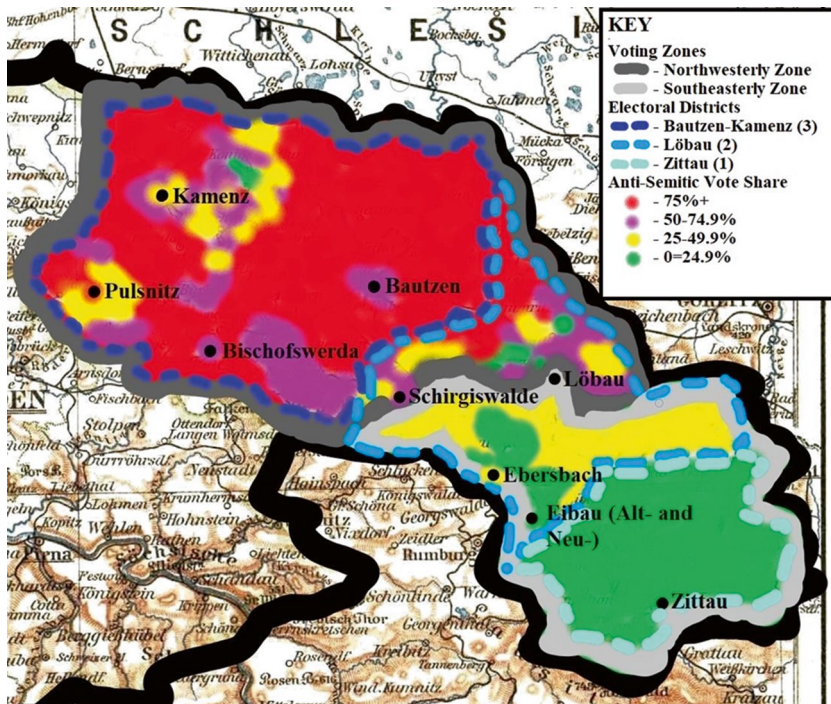
Map 2.1 Administrative and electoral districts of the Province of Bautzen, 1893

Table 2.1 Results by electoral district (*Wahlkreis*), 1893 Reichstag election, *First Round*

	<i>Bautzen-Kamenz</i>		<i>Löbau</i>		<i>Zittau</i>	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total	20,547	100.00%	17,052	100.00%	19,388	100.00%
Reform Party	10,572	51.45%	6318	37.05%	–	–
Conservatives	5685	27.67%	–	–	–	–
Social Democrats	3622	17.63%	4466	26.19%	5659	29.19%
Center	518	2.52%	–	–	–	–
Left-Liberal	116	0.56%	4598 ^a	26.96% ^a	6068 ^a	31.30% ^a
National Liberal	–	–	1658	9.72%	7655	39.48%

Source: Kaiserlichen Statistischen Amt, *Vierteljahreshefte zur Statistik des Deutschen Reichs*: 1893, vol. 4 (Berlin: Puttkammer & Mühlbrecht, 1893), 40–42

^aThese parties won the run-off elections

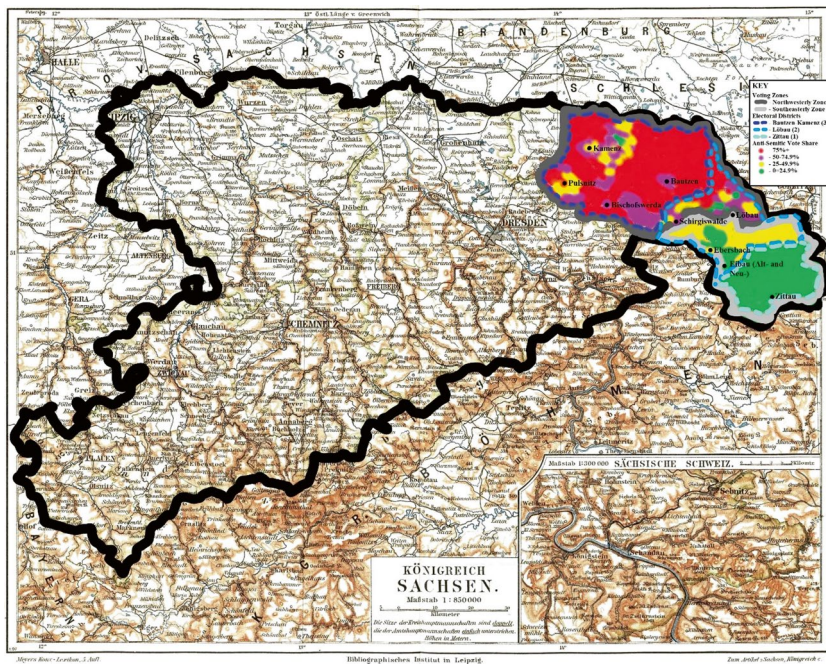


Map 2.2 Voting zones and antisemitic vote share in Saxon electoral districts 1–3, 1893 Reichstag election, first round. (Cropped)

Note: “Antisemitic vote share” refers to the total vote share won by explicitly antisemitic parties, namely, the DKP and Reform Party. Precinct-level voting returns for both Löbau and Bautzen-Kamenz electoral district are available upon request, as is a more detailed map that locates particular precincts and color-codes them by antisemitic vote share

electoral district, were typified by relatively high rates of antisemitic voting. That the Reformers took nearly two-thirds of votes in the 26 Löbau district precincts north of Löbau city, for example, puts it roughly in line with the strong antisemitic turnout in Bautzen-Kamenz.¹⁶ By contrast, the

¹⁶Across the following precincts, 1651 of 2613 first-round voters (63.2%) favored Zimmermann: Breitendorf and Zschorna; Dolgowitz, Wendisch-Kunnersdorf and Wendisch-Paulsdorf; Drehsa; Eiseroode; Glossen mit Goßwitz; Gröditz; Herwigsdorf; Hochkirch; Karlsbrunn and Wohla; Kittlitz; Kleinradmeritz and Oppeln; Kohlwsa and Kuppritz; Lauske; Lautitz; Lehn and Plotzen; Maltitz; Nostitz; Oehlich and Zoblitz; Oelsa; Rodewitz and Niethen; Sohland a. Rotstein; Sornßig; Unwürde and Laucha; Wurschen. *Oberlausitzer Dorfzeitung*, 17 June 1893, No. 24.



Map 2.3 Voting zones and antisemitic vote share in Saxon electoral districts 1–3, 1893 Reichstag election, first round. (Uncropped)

relative weakness of political antisemitism in a “southeasterly voting zone” stretching from the remainder of Löbau through Zittau electoral district is captured by both Zimmermann’s poor performance in southern Löbau and the failure of the antisemites to contest Zittau. In this chapter, “eastern Saxony” will be used synonymously with Bautzen Province as a whole, while the high- and low-antisemitism portions of Bautzen Province will be referred to more specifically as the “northwesterly zone” and “southeasterly zone.”¹⁷

¹⁷Though we recognize that the qualities, reputations, and personal histories of particular candidates can have bearing on electoral outcomes, our research has revealed nothing to suggest that factors extraneous to stated beliefs and platforms had a determinant role in any of these races. That the outcomes revealed a relatively consistent gradation of antisemitic voting both across and within multiple electoral districts, each with its own candidates, suggests that the effects of incidental factors like reputation were minimal.

The divergence in antisemitic voting between these two zones raises important questions about east-Saxons' receptiveness to antisemitic messaging. What accounts for the drastic difference between Gräfe's first-round victory in Bautzen-Kamenz and the fundamental inability of the antisemites to contest Zittau, particularly given the relative absence of Jews in both areas? What does it say about the intensity of antisemitism in the northwesterly zone that Gräfe achieved a first-round majority even while facing a Conservative challenger? Despite Retallack's reminder that "the lines between Conservatism and antisemitism became...so indistinct as to virtually disappear" in 1890s Saxony,¹⁸ it appears significant that Bautzen-Kamenz voters turned away from their traditional party in favor of one for which antisemitism was the *defining* rather than merely one constitutive issue. It also appears significant that Gräfe carried the district repeatedly through the outbreak of World War I, by which time all other east-Saxon districts had turned SPD red.

For some, economic anxieties and class analyses provide the key to explaining Saxony's phenomenon of antisemitism without Jews. Many scholars advance Richard Levy's early distinction between the Hessian peasant-populist antisemitism of Otto Böckel's Central German Peasant League and the Saxon antisemitism rooted in an unsettled *Mittelstand* (retailers, merchants, artisans, teachers, lower civil servants, small farmers, and other petit bourgeois elements) squeezed between the forces of capitalist liberalism and insurgent socialism, both associated with Jews.¹⁹ In most cases, this Hessian-versus-Saxon schematization yields characterizations of Saxon antisemitism as a phenomenon of the *urban* "old *Mittelstand*"—the artisans, merchants, and shopkeepers threatened by consumer cooperatives, industrial production, global trade, and other

¹⁸ James Retallack, "Conservatives and Antisemites in Baden and Saxony," *German History* 17 no. 4 (1999), 507. See also Retallack, *Red Saxony*, 259–261; Stanley Suval, *Electoral Politics in Wilhelmine Germany* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 89.

¹⁹ Levy, *Downfall of the Anti-Semitic Political Parties*, 99. See also Sperber, *The Kaiser's Voters*, 213; Retallack, *Red Saxony*, 210.