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'Fascism's strength was its democratic strength'

In gesprek met George Mosse

Chris Quispel en Peer Vries

In november 1990 was George L. Mosse op uitnodiging van het Joods Historisch Museum in Nederland om een aantal lezingen en colleges te geven. Bij die gelegenheid deed hij ook Leiden aan. Daar sprak hij op 12 november over het onderwerp 'The roots of national-socialist anti-Semitism'. De redactie van *Leidschrift* greep deze kans aan en maakte een afspraak met hem voor een interview. Dat zou daags daarna in Amsterdam plaatshebben.

George Mosse is geboren in Duitsland als zoon van één van de belangrijkste vooroorlogse Duitse uitgevers, eigenaar van belangrijke kranten als het *Berliner Tageblatt* en de *Volkszeitung*. Al in 1933 verliet hij Hitler-Duitsland. Hij ging in Engeland geschiedenis studeren, een studie die hij noodgedwongen afbrak en moest voltooien in de Verenigde Staten, waar hij in 1939, toen de oorlog uitbrak, verbleef en waarvandaan hij niet kon terugkeren.

Aanvankelijk was hij vooral geïnteresseerd in de vroegmoderne geschiedenis, maar vanaf het midden van de jaren vijftig ging hij zich steeds meer bezighouden met nationalisme, antisemitisme en hun relatie met de opkomst van 'de massa' als belangrijkste politieke factor. Zijn aandacht gaat daarbij vooral uit naar het ontstaan van 'mythes' en de wijze waarop die binnen de politiek een prominente rol kunnen gaan spelen. Zijn belangrijkste werken, althans op het terrein dat in dit interview aan de orde komt, zijn: *The crisis of German ideology. Intellectual origins of the Third Reich* (New York 1964); *The nationalisation of the masses; Political symbolism and mass-movements in Germany from the Napoleonic wars through the Third Reich* (New York 1975); *Toward the Final Solution; A history of European racism* (New York 1978); *Masses and men; Nationalist and fascist perceptions on reality* (New York 1980) en *Nationalism and sexuality; Respectability and abnormal sexuality in modern Europe* (New York 1985). Zeer toegankelijk en interessant is het uitgebreide interview dat M. Ledeen hem in 1976 afnam en dat onder Mosse's naam verscheen als *Nazism. A historical and comparative analysis of National-Socialism; An interview with M. Ledeen* (New Brunswick 1978). We wijzen tenslotte op het interview met Mosse in *Spiegel Historiael*, 'George L. Mosse over de Duitslanden en de Duitsers. Een interview van Martijn van Lieshout met George Mosse', *Spiegel Historiael* 26, no. 4 (1991) 187-192. De twee laatste publikaties bieden ook verdere biografische en bibliografische gegevens.

Het vraaggesprek bestaat uit vier afzonderlijke delen waarin telkens een bepaald thema centraal wordt gesteld. In deel I gaat de aandacht vooral uit naar het vergelijken van nationale tradities in diverse landen en naar de gevolgen daarvan voor het al dan niet ontstaan van fascistische bewegingen of regeringen. Deel II vormt in zoverre een nadere uitwerking van I, dat hier Mosse's mening wordt gevraagd over de zogeheten 'Historikerstreit'. In deze discussie speelt vergelijking eveneens een grote rol. Centraal staan hier de vergelijking van de ontwikkeling in Nazi-Duitsland en die in de Sovjet-Unie van Stalin en de vraag naar een eventuele wisselwerking daartussen. In dit deel wordt ook nader ingegaan op de aard van het Nazisme. In deel III wordt aandacht geschonken aan het fundamentele onderscheid dat volgens Mosse bestaat tussen aard en intensiteit van vervolgingen in perioden dat er nog geen sprake was van een moderne massa-samenleving en in de periode ná de Franse Revolutie toen daarvan in Europa wél sprake was. In deel IV tenslotte komt kort de vraag aan de orde in hoeverre samenlevingen 'countertypes' en 'outcasts' nodig hebben en in hoeverre racistische of nationalistische ideeën 'onvermijdelijk' zijn.

I

Most of the books you wrote during the last thirty years deal with racism and nationalism in Germany. Why Germany? Is Germany unique in this respect?

No it is not, and I changed my mind on that a great deal. When I first wrote *The crisis of German ideology* in 1964, I think still my best known book in some ways, I made Germany more unique than it is.¹ But if you read my book on racism which is of 1978, I revised this considerably.² No, I do not think Germany is unique, if anything, the laboratory of racist ideas was France. There is no doubt about that. Germany only comes to the fore during the First World War and its aftermath. Of course there is a kind of national tradition in Germany. But the actualization of the idea took place in France before the First World War much more than in Germany. If anybody in 1914 would have asked: 'Who is going to kill the Jews?' the answer would have been 'France'. Nobody would have thought of Germany.

In your work on Germany you attach great importance to the so-called 'völkische idea'. Can we also find it in France?

Yes, think for example of the French writer Maurice Barrès and his 'la terre et la mort'.³ It is roughly the same. It is perhaps more accentuated in Germany after 1870, after the disappointment with national unity. But it was also important in

France after the defeat in 1870. What you get in France, and not in Germany, is this combination of nationalism and socialism. Germany of course had its nationalism, in some cases racism, for example in the case of Wagner. But the social component which was so strong in France, with the distribution of property and the interest in the working class, was much weaker there. You do not have that in Germany, because there this was co-opted by a strong organised socialist working-class movement.

You suggest the 'völkische idea' was at least as strong in France as it was in Germany, or even stronger. Then of course there is a problem: For what reason did Germany become 'famous' as a nationalist country?

That I think is not difficult to answer. That is a result of the transition of war to peace in the period 1918 to 1923, which in France was very smooth, as we know, while in Italy it was rough and in Germany it was very rough.

You mean losing the war made the big difference?

Yes, and what came afterwards, the disintegration of the political and social fabric, revolution and counter-revolution, then a period of tranquillity, then a period of further disintegration after 1928. France did not avoid all these problems, but it avoided them enough to make it.

You are emphasizing the discontinuity between developments in Germany before and developments after the First World War. Does this imply you disagree with historians who think there is something like a German 'Sonderweg' which already began with Bismarck, or even earlier?⁴

That may be true for the social structure rather than for nationalism. I think every nation has its 'Sonderweg'.

So there is no line 'from Bismarck to Hitler'?

No, no more than there is in France from Boulanger to Petain. The line is not very strong. Conditions have changed. I do think though that there are different national traditions. If you examine how far down 'völkische ideas' have penetrated, then you see that in France in the period 1890-1900 there was a large labour-movement (*les jaunes*) that was nationalistic and anti-Semitic. You do not have that in

Germany at all. On the other hand you had a strong organised socialist movement there, which did not exist in France.

But were not circumstances in Germany such that it was more likely that authoritarian movements would get to power there than in France?

You would have to define 'authoritarian'. Of course there was a certain type of authoritarian movement in Germany. But after all France only nearly escaped fascism and French fascism was a very authoritarian movement. In fact France pioneered in that. The first really modern mass-authoritarian regime was general Boulanger's and not Bismarck's. Modern authoritarian regimes are democratic regimes, they are based on the crowds, on the masses. Bismarck's regime was an aristocratic regime. That did not have much of a future, as such. Hitler is more like Drumont than he is like Bismarck.

In your books you never mention the Great Depression, the crisis of 1929. Does this mean you do not consider it very important in the history of national-socialism?

Without that depression Hitler would not have come to power, no doubt. What pushed Germany into the forefront of racism is the dissolving of the social and economic fabric. In France the social fabric held, barely, but it held. England is an even better example, nothing much happened. You cannot compare the situation there to what was going on in Germany.

But still there is something strange. In 1927 Hitler was unimportant, a nobody, and then suddenly he, a racist, is the leader of a mass-movement. Do you think that even during the Weimar Republic there existed a strong anti-Semitic 'tradition' in Germany?

You have to look at the total picture. There was always a racist party, the German National Party. They had a very good propaganda-machine. They were just as racist as the national-socialists. The conservatives had been racists since 1918 for all intents and purposes. Hitler of course was much more extreme. Without the depression maybe the Weimar Republic would have survived. At worst there might have been a military dictatorship. What actually happened was the result, not only of the economic crisis, but of the coinciding of a deep economic, social and political crisis. Because of this coinciding Hitler emerged. There is a school of economic historians who say that when Hitler came to power the depression was already

vanishing.⁵ If the Republic would have held out a little longer, he would not have become the Führer. Personally I think Hitler's rise is not so difficult to explain with this kind of depression in the background.

You emphasize that every country has its own unique history, its own 'Sonderweg'. Does this mean comparing developments in different countries and looking for similarities does not make much sense?

No, I think you have to compare. I always compare. I never write only about Germany. I think that is very unfruitful. But you have to compare the similarities *and* the differences. Every country has its nationalism and all European nationalisms are *more or less* the same.

Is there an equivalent of the 'völkische idea' in Italy, the other country which had a strong fascist movement?

Italy is a very special case. There were 'völkische ideas' in every country, but least of all in Italy. And that has to do with the liberal unification and with anticlericalism. The Church in Italy had a specific position and was against the Republic. The pope and the Papal States were there. Italian nationalists had to take sides against the Church and that drove them in a liberal direction. Anti-Semitism for example was hardly known in Italy. I think England is an example of a country where the assimilation of the Jews did succeed. But the best example is Italy. There the assimilation of the Jews was complete. They could become generals, which they became nowhere else. But that is a special case. When the racial laws were introduced in 1938, it was almost impossible to enforce them. The populace did not support anti-Semitism, definitively not. The army protected the Jews. That is a matter of tradition. Italy's nationalist tradition is different. Italy was united in a different way and under a liberal tradition. After all Mazzini can hardly be compared to Bismarck, or even Boulanger. Personally I think England is an even more interesting case because there the Jews became assimilated very much and fascism did not get anywhere, not least because it transgressed respectability. Still there was and is a great deal of anti-Semitism in England, social anti-Semitism. There are people who say that basically England is anti-Semitic. I am not one of those, but I recognise the social anti-Semitism. So, really of all the countries I know, the only ones where assimilation succeeded to such an extent, is Italy, and I must add England. I know too little about the Scandinavian countries, but here there seems to have been a great measure of success as well.

And the Netherlands?

I suppose you are right. I do not know enough about Dutch history. But even here there were people who helped the Nazis.

The same thing seems to have happened in Franco-Spain. I would not say Franco was a friend of the Jews, but he surely was not a vigorous anti-Semite.

No, not at all. The same thing happened in Spain. At least when Franco was in power. Before that you can see a certain German influence.

You hardly ever mention Austria in your work. Why is that? After all anti-Semitism was very strong there.

I take Austria in with Germany. At least German Austria, not Hungarian Austria or the other parts of Austria. German Austria is the font of it all, more than that, it is the center. People there were very nationalistic. After all they lived on a frontier, that between Germans and Slaves.

As far as I know something about Austrian history - which is not much - the problems of nation-building and state-building there were quite different from those in what was to become Germany.

You are right. But as I said, I am only talking about the German parts of Austria. They had very strong nationalist movements. Think for example of Bohemia. These regions in Austria were really German regions. It was only by accident or fate that they became outposts.

But around 1900, when Hitler still lived in Austria, the most important anti-Semitic movement there was Lueger's. And Lueger was not a German nationalist. He did not have any 'völkische ideas'.

He had some. But he was part of a 'national-socialist' tradition, which was also strong in Bohemia. Bohemia had the first national-socialist party in Central-Europe. Lueger's party was national-socialist. He became an anti-Semite from a background of social reform. These things got mixed up. Hitler was very influenced by Lueger, not by Stalin. He writes about this in *Mein Kampf*.

II

At this moment the most important, or at least the most sensational discussion with regard to the nature of German nationalism and national-socialism is the so-called 'Historikerstreit' in which some historians not only compare Hitler's regime with Stalin's but also defend the thesis that Hitler's regime was in some way a reaction against Stalin's threat.⁶

The 'Historikerstreit' is absurd in some ways. I am very much against Nolte. Hitler had his own agenda. He was much more influenced, as he said himself, by the Armenian massacre in the First World War. I do not think you can prove any influence of Stalin. As I said, he was influenced by Lueger. Mussolini was influenced by Stalin. He was a man of the world. He knew what was going on and was more or less a cosmopolitan politician. Hitler was a provincial all his life. And now you have Arno Mayer's book, which is even more wrong-headed.⁷ Arno Mayer is still fighting the Cold War. This has nothing to do with history, this has to do with the Cold War.

Could you specify what is absurd in Nolte's thesis?

Yes, let me put it this way. Of course the Nazis were anti-communist, nobody would deny that. But their anti-communism was part of an agenda, of a revolutionary agenda. It was, if you like, a symbol. I do not think that the Holocaust had much to do with foreign policy. We know how the Holocaust came about, it is not a great secret. Hitler wanted it from the beginning. The others did not, and were astonished when it was decreed. But it was built into racism. Let me put it another way around. The mistake of historians like Arno Mayer or Nolte is that when they write the history of national-socialism they leave two factors out: Hitler and racism. And I do not know how you can write this history without putting Hitler and racism in the centre. What is true in it I think is that Hitler cleverly used the hatred of the West for Stalin in his foreign policies. This I would not deny. But in internal politics I think what is important is racism and Hitler himself. Of course, it is quite correct that both Hitler and Mussolini were against communism, that they both made the communists their big enemies. But you have to ask what they meant by 'communists'. To the Nazis 'communist' was identical to 'outsider'. The word is always hyphenated. Jewish-communist, Gypsy-communist, and so on. I am very skeptical about those theories in which all anti-communist movements are mixed up, as Nolte does in the famous book he wrote in 1963.⁸ The Action Française for example is quite different from national-socialism. It is a conservative movement. National-socialism is not, it is a democratic movement.

You mean it was a mass-movement?

No. People always find it very difficult to understand that fascism is a democratic movement. I think one normally uses the word 'democratic' in a very 'artificial' way, as to apply to parliamentary democracy only. To millions of people that was not a democratic system. They think going to the ballot-box is dreary and has no effect. Joining a mass demonstration or meeting gives one a big feeling of participation. Fascism's strength was its democratic strength. It is a misunderstanding to identify a movement such as the Action Française with fascism. Action Française hated the masses. Its leaders did not give a damn for public mass-support. They were conservative, not democratic.

That is also true for Franco.

Only ignorants say Franco-Spain was fascist. Franco-Spain was a military dictatorship. It was certainly not a fascist regime. The fascists were the members of the Falange. Franco crushed them. The difference between reactionary or conservative regimes and fascist regimes is very important. Fascist regimes are not, by and large, reactionary. They are modernizing regimes. Both Hitler and Mussolini modernized a great deal. They were concerned about the lower classes, especially the petite bourgeoisie to which so many of the Nazi leaders belonged, but they did things for the workers as well. They believed in a hierarchy of function, not status

But on the other hand they were constantly referring to the past.

All nationalisms appeal to the past. But apart from appealing to the past, the fascists were also modernizing the present, which conservative and reactionary regimes do not do that much as you can see for example in Hungary during Horthy's regime. Those conservative regimes are based on privileges. Nazism and fascism changed ruling elites, they made it possible for new elites to come up.

But is not Hitler conservative in the sense that he is part of the German racist tradition?

No, Hitler is not part of the mainstream of racist tradition at all. Hitler had a kind of occult racism. He was influenced by theosophy, secret sciences and so on. A racism in which there was a clear battle to the death between forces of good and of evil. If you read *Mein Kampf* for example, you can see he really believed that. There is a school which says that Nazism was chaos.⁹ I do not believe that in the least. I

think Hitler got what he wanted. Whatever chaos there may have been underneath of him in the bureaucracy, he got what he wanted and there is no doubt that what he wanted from the beginning was to get rid of the Jews.

When a politician gets what he wants, we usually call him a political genius.

Hitler was a political genius, no question about that. He had a terrific political instinct for what could be done at a given time and what not. That is why he went so slow at first. He acted when the moment was really ripe, the most opportune, in internal and foreign politics.

III

In your books on racism and anti-Semitism you always start somewhere in the eighteenth or nineteenth century. Why?

Because that is when modern society as it were 'took off'. In my opinion the French Revolution is very important for an understanding of fascism and its characteristics. That is when you get the first, if you like, 'democratic' movement, the first mass-movement. Then the masses for the first time become part of the political process. Maybe you could start a little earlier. Rousseau of course already defined 'the people'. But I would not go back further than the eighteenth century.

But do you not think there existed older traditions of 'exclusion', for example the way Jews or witches were treated?

Yes, but these are very different traditions. The way witches were treated, for example. Of course, in some ways their treatment was alike. They were treated as 'deviants'. But witch-hunting was not a mass-movement. There was no 'democracy' then. You cannot have fascism without a 'demos'. The witches were burnt according to the wishes of the inquisitors. I am sure the people were against them, but that does not mean witch-hunting was a mass-movement. You need some kind of mass participation for that.

And what about the persecution of the Jews in the Middle Ages?

That was a religious persecution, not a total one. There was always the escape of baptism.

So you mean to say that the two big differences between older traditions of exclusion and the 'modern' one are the concept of 'race' and the existence of 'modern mass-society'?

Yes. And those are very important differences. Racism is a modern movement. To have a racist, totalitarian state you need a modern society with science, medicine, biology etcetera. In the old persecutions of the Jews only baptism stood in the way of becoming a Christian and not being persecuted. Nothing else. At least in theory. In practice, I think in early modern Spain with its inquisitors and its 'limpieza de sangre' there may have been some kind of rehearsal for modern racism.¹⁰ That is a possible precedent. But again, this is not really very important because people did not know it was a precedent. Historians always trace everything back to Greece and Rome, but that is irrelevant if the people at the time knew nothing about it.

But even if there is such a big difference in the 'structure' of pre-modern and modern persecutions, could there not be some kind of continuity in their 'content'. Is there not some continuity in ideas? Do not you think that the old stereotype of the Jew was still functional in modern times?

There was no old stereotype of the Jew, at least not a visual one. Jews do not have Jewish noses in medieval representations, by and large. They were differently dressed, but it was still a religious persecution. Which means a persecution you could escape and which would not end in destruction. People who are different are always persecuted, in every society and every age. So that is not a great surprise. You see what I mean?

No, not quite. There are many people who are different and who are praised for it.

If their number is small enough. In the eighteenth century the Europeans praised the Chinese because there were just very few of them in Europe and they were exotic. But as soon as a group ceases to be exotic, it becomes a totally different matter.

But even so this basic question arises, which is of course very important in studying the final solution: 'Why do people define "normal" and "abnormal" or "us" and "them" in one way and not in another?'

That has to do with the construction of society, in this case society in the nineteenth

century. I wrote about that in my *Nationalism and sexuality*.¹¹ The 'normal' and the 'abnormal', that is basically also a construction of modern society. 'Normality' and 'abnormality' were something quite different in the early modern period. These concepts were only really constructed towards the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century and the beginning of modern mass-society. Then modern society with its very definite and specific ideas, behaviour, dress etcetera was created.

So you do not agree with R.I. Moore who argues that already during the Middle Ages the state persecuted people, for example lepers, homosexuals, heretics or Jews, because they were 'different'.¹²

Surely people who were different were also persecuted then. But there is a difference. The borders then were drawn much more widely. In modern times you get a tightening up. That is a very big difference. The difference between an aristocratic society and a middle-class society.

According to Michel Foucault the process of 'policing' the people already started at a much earlier moment in time. It struck me you hardly ever mention him.

Of course I could mention him. We all know he was wrong about insanity asylums in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.¹³ So I cannot mention that. It is a nice theory, but it does not correspond to fact. I do mention him, very much, when I am discussing the medicalization of society in the nineteenth century. I think that in his book on the asylums he reads things back from the more modern period. He turns them into a kind of early Gulags. He puts up a theory and then everything has to fit this theory. Sometimes the theory is correct, for example when he discusses the medicalization of society in the nineteenth century. His books on the prison and the asylum however have been criticised very heavily by people who really know about these subjects.¹⁴ I do not.

IV

In your lecture you said the Jew was a 'counter-type'.¹⁵ Do you think every society always needs such a 'counter-type', or does this need only arise in specific circumstances ?

There has always been this kind of 'counter-type'. The witches for example were

'counter-types' to the ideal of womanhood. You could say - although I do not really want to say this because it is too general - that people always need something different, a foil against which they can define themselves. All one can say historically is that with the beginning of the modern age the 'counter-type' becomes much more clearly defined. There were beautiful witches too. It is not so simple. There were also male witches. Even the 'counter-type' of the witch was not so clearly defined.

Let us suppose you are right when you are saying that the difference between 'normal' and 'abnormal', 'respectable' and 'not-respectable' has become bigger and more sharply defined during the nineteenth century. That still leaves the question unanswered why some people and some behaviour are considered 'decent' and other people and other behaviour are not. Why select 'the Jew' as countertype? You might say they were recognizable, but not all of them were. Many were not.

That does not matter. They were still the only recognizable minority in Europe. There were the Wends near Berlin, with their peculiar costume, but that costume was still more or less like all other local costumes. The Jews were the only minority in Europe who, in great masses and very visibly, had a different dress, different language, different prayers, different living conditions... Perhaps the gypsies were more or less in the same position. But they were not so threatening. Gypsies did not become rich or attempted assimilation into the dominant society.

In your lecture you said that it was only during the Dreyfus-affair that many people in France for the first time saw the Jews as Jews.

Yes, only then do we know that the stereotype deeply penetrates into their mind. I think it all began before, but the real penetration started only then.

But the idea that there is something 'wrong' with the Jews, was that not already a much older idea?

I am talking about a very specific idea, a specific 'counter-type', not about all the old ideas. You already find that 'counter-type' before Dreyfus. I was exaggerating a little. But the Dreyfus-affair was very important. The penetration of the stereotype coincided with the beginning of the modern mass-media. Maybe in Germany things went a little slower, but in the eighteen-eighties and the eighteen-nineties the stereotype began to have a mass forum.

What do you mean by 'the Jewish stereotype'? It is very difficult to see what exactly was wrong with the Jews according to the anti-Semites. They were too rich, they were too poor, they assimilated, they did not assimilate...

Well, they are always the exact opposite of all society was supposed to stand for. They cheat, they are not honest, they are cowards.

But if they are not cowards, it does not matter. That is of no avail.

No, of course not. When the stereotype is already in place that does not matter. This kind of thinking is not subject to rational argument. In the period of 1930-1933 Jewish organisations in Weimar Germany used to give cards to people to settle anti-Semitic arguments. When for example somebody in a train said 'dirty Jew', you replied: 'And what about Einstein?'. We are now beyond that. We know anti-Semitism has nothing to do with rational arguments whatsoever. In fact that is its strength. If there are Jews who do not look like Jews are supposed to look, they are the fifth column.

But does this not imply your work is somehow futile? In your books you say you hope that by diagnosing the problem of racism, we can prevent something like the events in Germany from happening again.¹⁶ But if as you say racism is an irrational ideology, how exactly can it be prevented by rational analysis and rational argumentation?

When irrational ideologies cannot be prevented, we are badly off. Whether you can ever successfully combat them, I do not know. That is a totally different story. But you *have* to try, by education and so on.

Do you personally think this kind of ideologies can ever be combatted successfully?

No, probably not. Nobody knows. History is open, the future is open. But there is always an outsider. In Europe at the moment things are going fine, there is no great need for him. Although even now Europeans have their outsiders. It is no longer the Jew but the asylum seeker. The people of the Third World have taken his place.

Is this not a rather optimistic picture of 'Europe'? If for example we look at Eastern Europe...

Well there everything will go as in the nineteen-twenties. The countries there will, I believe, all become dictatorships of one sort or another. All kinds of crisis, political, economical and social, coincide. There again the whole fabric dissolves. Poland will have its dictator very soon.¹⁷ Nationalism of course comes to the fore in such a situation. These Eastern European countries are strongly nationalistic. In those parts of Europe where everything is going well you do not need such nationalism.

And what about anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe?

It will emerge. It already has. There is a lot of racism. People will now do what the communists prevented them from doing. Communism kept the lid on. But now it appears to have been only a very thin layer. Not only anti-Semitism will arise once more but also the enmity against their neighbours.

Noten

1. Mosse verwijst hier naar zijn boek *The crisis of German ideology. Intellectual origins of the Third Reich* (New York 1964).
2. Mosse verwijst hier naar zijn boek *Toward the Final Solution. A history of European racism* (New York 1978).
3. Voor een schets van diverse 'proto-fascistische' groepen en opvattingen in Frankrijk vóór de Eerste Wereldoorlog zie bijvoorbeeld Zeev Sternhell, *La droite révolutionnaire. Les origines françaises du fascisme. 1885-1914* (Parijs 1978). Dezelfde auteur publiceerde in 1972 een boek dat geheel aan Barrès is gewijd getiteld *Maurice Barrès et le nationalisme français* (Parijs 1972).
4. Voor een recent overzicht van de discussie over de Duitse 'Sonderweg' zie Jürgen Kocka, 'Deutsche Geschichte vor Hitler. Zur Diskussion über den "deutschen Sonderweg"' in: Idem, *Geschichte und Aufklärung* (Göttingen 1989) 101-114.
5. Voor de denkbeelden van deze 'school' zie bijvoorbeeld de artikelen van G.D. Feldman, 'Aspekte deutscher Industriepolitik am Ende der Weimarer Republik 1930-1932' en H.-J. Rüstow, 'Entstehung und Überwindung der Wirtschaftskrise am Ende der Weimarer Republik und die gegenwärtige Rezession. Überlegungen eines beteiligten', beide opgenomen in: K. Holl, ed., *Wirtschaftskrise und liberale Demokratie* (Göttingen 1978) 103-125 en 126-151. Een algemeen overzicht van de economische ontwikkelingen in Duitsland van net voor de machtsovername door Hitler cum suis tot 1938 biedt Overy, *The Nazi recovery 1932-1938* (Londen 1938).
6. De Historikerstreit heeft inmiddels al tot een onoverzienbare berg publicaties geleid. We noemen hier slechts de volgende recente overzichten: G. Eley, 'Nazism, politics and the image of the past: thoughts on the West German "Historikerstreit" 1986-1987', *Past and Present* no 121 (1988) 171-208; I. Kershaw, *The Nazi dictatorship. Problems of perspectives and interpretation* (Londen 1989); R. Evans, *In Hitler's shadow. West German historians and the attempt to escape from the Nazi-past* (Londen 1989); Ch. Maier, *The unmasterable past. History, Holocaust and German national identity* (Cambridge, Mass. 1988). Een zeer recente analyse van dit debat, waaraan deze literatuur is ontleend, biedt Ch.F.G. Lorenz, *Geschiedenis in perspectief. Over waarden, feiten en de be-*

- trekkelijke waarde van feiten in de geschiedwetenschap. Oratie uitgesproken te Leiden 16-11-1990, verschenen te Leiden in 1991.
7. Het boek van Mayer waar Mosse hier op doelt, heet: A. Mayer, *Why did the heavens not darken?: the "final solution" in history* (New York 1988).
 8. E. Nolte, *Der Faschismus in seiner Epoche. Die Action française; der italienische Faschismus; der Nationalsozialismus* (1e druk; München 1963).
 9. Voor de visie dat Nazi-Duitsland lang niet zo 'gründlich' georganiseerd was als velen denken, zie bijvoorbeeld het inmiddels klassieke M. Broszat, *Der Staat Hitlers. Grundlegung und Entwicklung seiner inneren Verfassung* (1e druk; München 1969).
 10. Voor het begrip 'limpieza de sangre' (zuiverheid van het bloed) zie A. Sicroff, *Les controverses des statuts de pureté de sang en Espagne du XVe au XVIIe siècle* (Parijs 1960).
 11. G.L. Mosse, *Nationalism and sexuality: respectability and abnormal sexuality in Modern Europe* (New York 1985).
 12. R.I. Moore, *The formation of a persecuting society* (Oxford 1987).
 13. Michel Foucault, *Folie et déraison; histoire de la folie à l'âge classique* (Parijs 1961). Van dit boek verscheen een verkorte uitgave in het Nederlands onder de titel *Geschiedenis van de waanzin* (1e druk; Meppel 1975).
 14. Het boek van Foucault over de geschiedenis van de gevangenis waarnaar Mosse hier verwijst, is Michel Foucault, *Surveiller et punir: Naissance de la prison* (Parijs 1975). Ook van dit boek is een Nederlandse vertaling verschenen, onder de titel *Discipline, toezicht en straf. De geboorte van de gevangenis* (Groningen 1989). Voor de 'medicalisatie' in de negentiende eeuw zie: M. Foucault, *Naissance de la clinique. Une archéologie du regard médical* (1e druk; Parijs 1963); in het Nederlands vertaald onder de titel: *Geboorte van de kliniek: een archeologie van de medische blik* (Nijmegen 1986).
 15. Hier wordt verwezen naar de in de inleiding genoemde lezing die Mosse daags voor dit interview in Leiden had gehouden.
 16. Dat Mosse hoopt met zijn werk een bijdrage te kunnen leveren aan het voorkomen van allerlei vormen van racisme en discriminatie blijkt bijvoorbeeld in de conclusie van zijn *Toward the final solution*, 237: 'The first step toward victory over this scourge of mankind is to understand what brought it about, the longings and hopes that it aroused in the past. This book is meant toward the diagnosis of the cancer of racism within our nations and even within ourselves' en in het voorwoord van de in 1981 verschenen versie van *The crisis of German ideology*, VIII: 'By analyzing the Volkisch triumph in the past perhaps we can prevent its victory in the future'.
 17. Toen dit interview werd afgenomen, stonden we aan de vooravond van de verkiezingen in Polen. De dictator waar Mosse op doelt, is Lech Walesa.