

Race and Sexuality: The Role of the Outsider

I

Nationalism together with bourgeois respectability played a crucial role in determining how men and women were perceived by modern society. Racism strengthened both the historical and the visual thrust of nationalism; it emphasized the stereotypes of superior and inferior races, while the distinctive history of each people was said to determine their superiority or inferiority for all time to come. Racism was a heightened nationalism: the differences between peoples were no longer perceived as chance variations, but as immutable, fixed in place. Racism in its various forms did not always follow the same inspiration or lead to the same results, yet it always encouraged nationalism in its tendency to claim absolute dominance. As a form of heightened nationalism, racism supported bourgeois respectability. It emphasized the distinction between vice and virtue, the necessity of a clear line between the normal and abnormal according to the rules society laid down. This racism was at its height in the years between the two world wars, but it had made its influence felt ever since the middle of the nineteenth century.

The association between racism and sexuality was immediate and direct. Racism brought to a climax tendencies that had been inherent in the alliance between nationalism and respectability. From the beginnings of European racism in the eighteenth century, the description of blacks included their supposed inability to control their sexual passions, as anthropologists and those who elabo-

rated national stereotypes transformed the noble savage into a sans-culotte—without shame, living in a state of chaos, unable to govern himself. Jews were thought lustful long before Adolf Hitler's decision to join the anti-Semitic movement, taken in Vienna where, as he tells it, he saw Jews waiting to catch Aryan girls—the icy-cold, shameless, and businesslike managers of prostitution and white slavery.¹ The stereotype of the so-called inferior race filled with lust was a staple of racism, part of the inversion of accepted values characteristic of the "outsider," who at one and the same time threatened society and by his very existence confirmed its standards of behavior. Racism branded the outsider, making him inevitably a member of the inferior race, wherever this was possible, readily recognized as a carrier of infection threatening the health of society and the nation. Above all racism was a scavenger ideology, harnessing to its banner the fears and hopes of bourgeois Europe.

Lack of control over their passions characterized all outsiders, although individual racists might vary their description of the inferior race. The black was thought feckless, while the Jew was without a soul, his morality resided in the lower part of his body, as a tract of 1892 graphically tells us.² The insane, homosexuals, and habitual criminals shared this lack of control, striking at the very roots of society. All those who stood outside the respectable norms of bourgeois society were thus blended—the "accursed race," as Marcel Proust called Jews and homosexuals,³ but to which we must add habitual criminals and the insane.

Racism projected its stereotype upon any who failed to conform to the proper manners and morals. Sander L. Gilman has put it succinctly: "the statement that someone 'looks Jewish' or 'looks crazy' reflects the visual stereotype which culture created for the 'other' out of an arbitrary complex of features."⁴ Stereotyping through looks was basic to racism, a visually centered ideology. The bodily and mental features of outsiders reflected the fears of society—restlessness and sloth, mirrored through a "moveable physiognomy."⁵

The police officer F.C.B. Avé-Lallemant, describing the language and customs of German thieves in *Das Deutsche Gaunertum* (*German Rogues and Vagabonds*, 1858), remarked on the fact that pictures of criminals in former times showed widely distorted faces and physical deformities, when in reality criminals were indistinguishable in appearance from honest folk.⁶ He could have made the identical remark about Jews, the insane, or so-called sexual per-

verts. The outsider, when made to look and behave indecently, became less menacing because he could be more readily recognized and controlled.

Racism emphasized certain distinctions between the normal and the abnormal which we have met before, but which served to nail down still more firmly society's preconceptions and prejudices about looks and behavior. Exhaustion played a large part in this iconography, in contrast to that youthful vigor which society needed and valued so highly. Jews and so-called sexual perverts were often pictured as fragile, close to death, the victims of premature old age.

For example, Jews whether on the German stage or in Balzac's novels, were almost always portrayed as old men, while Schopenhauer asserted that homosexuality was a function of old age—"nature's way of preventing the old from conceiving children." This stereotype of old age deprived Jews of a family, at least on the German stage. Only during the nineteenth century did grown sons of Jews make an appearance; children would have radically destroyed the loneliness of the stereotype. Thus the Jew as an old man was denied integration into bourgeois life, while the homosexual's isolation was taken for granted. Oscar Wilde, as usual, got it dead right when he parodied society: "wicked people are always old and ugly."⁸

Masturbation, the foundation of most vice as the nineteenth century saw it, led to hideous deformations of the body and complete exhaustion of the nerves. Bertrand's wax museum in Paris illustrated these preconceptions graphically. Paris schoolchildren guided through in groups stared at the wax figure of a young masturbator in the last stages of agony, but also at those disfigured by venereal disease and a youth who had cut off one of his limbs in a "délire amoureux."⁹ All sexual excess led to disfigurement or death.

Ambroise Tardieu at mid-nineteenth century pictured homosexuals in a similar manner; their diseased and exhausted bodies gave them away.¹⁰ The outsider had to be clearly recognizable in order to be punished or excluded from society, hence the homosexual was condemned by law (and we remember the importance of forensic medicine in creating his stereotype), the insane committed, and the Jew isolated.

Exhaustion meant nervousness, so Jews, homosexuals, and the insane were pictured in constant motion. The iconography of hysteria popularized by the French psychiatrist Jean-Martin Charcot in the 1880s,¹¹ with all its contortions and grimaces, determined to a

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large extent not only how the insane but all those subject to nervousness were supposed to act. The nineteenth-century medical doctrine of the exhaustion of the nervous system supported this iconography as physicians spoke of "railway nerves" and Max Nordau found the causes of degeneration in steam and electricity, which had turned life upside down.¹² Fatigue was both a moral and physical disorder, a sign of weakness and absence of will. It accounted, as the novelist Joris-Karl Huysman wrote at the end of the century, for sensual aberrations produced by exhausted brains.¹³ This though Huysman's own anti-heroes of the decadent movement were characterized by their lack of will and rejection of youthful energy. Such portrayals of decadence usually included heightened sensibilities and a nervousness opposed to settled life. The pressures of the industrial age made this decadence ever more dangerous—stability was particularly vital in the midst of rapid change.

Moreover, for many physicians as well as racists, departures from the norm were caused by the surrender to modernity. One so-called sickness was often thought to lead to another—the outsider must be totally diseased. Iwan Bloch believed that the "vibrations of modernity" led to homosexuality, while Albert Moll, another sexologist, held that mental illness was widespread among the parents and kin of homosexuals.¹⁴ Nervousness was often perceived as a specifically Jewish disease, leading to a high rate of insanity among Jews, as anti-Semites like Edouard Drumont claimed. The association of Jews and mental illness was in all probability furthered by another tradition as well that had no tie to the practice of medicine. Even at the height of the Enlightenment, it was said of one Prussian town official who converted from Christianity to Judaism that "in all probability he suffers from mental illness."¹⁵ To leave society voluntarily raised the suspicion of mental illness; to be excluded by birth or by sexual preference implied an unsettled mind. Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, who in 1864 was the first person in Germany publicly to call for an end to the persecution of homosexuals, was declared insane by a Prussian textbook on forensic medicine.¹⁶ Men like Ulrichs were "sexual freaks," often lumped together with vagrants, criminals, and religious cranks, described in books that took the place of the old "cabinet of curiosities." The imputation of insanity was fastened upon such outsiders and racism made good use of it. Racism projected such stereo-

types upon the inferior race, and if found among the superior race (after all, most of these outsiders could be Aryans) detected a process of degeneration which had to be stopped at all costs.

The home of such "outsiders" was the big city, as we saw earlier in our discussion of homosexuality. By the end of the century the city had become a metaphor for everything unnatural. Popular works during the century like those of Balzac or Eugène Sue had already emphasized the artificiality of the city, its rupture from the genuine forces of life. Balzac wrote about the physical and moral degeneration that took place within its rush and bustle, where nothing was permanent and everything provisional. Small wonder that so many Parisians looked like living corpses (not unlike those in the wax museum), "people dreadful to behold." The American physician John H. Girdner in his *New Yorkitis* (1901) discovered a communicable disease, a special kind of inflammation, as he called it, which resulted from living in the big city. He found symptoms in "nervousness and lack of direction of all muscular movements."¹⁷ Once again medical diagnosis locked a highly subjective image into place and gave it the immutability of science. Here too racism made use of a process we have traced ever since respectability became a matter of health and sickness in the early part of the nineteenth century.

Normality required keeping in touch with the immutable and genuine forces of nature. The quest for rootedness which informed the bourgeois set it against its place of origin. Its members feared the impersonal monster they themselves had created: the monumental streets and buildings, the anonymous mass. Thus on one level the bourgeoisie sought to establish historical continuity—city halls were to imitate Gothic cathedrals, private villas, the palaces of the Renaissance. But above all the healing power of nature, symbolizing the genuine and the immutable, could serve to reinforce human control over a world forever on the brink of chaos. Such a use of nature was common in the nineteenth century, and became ever more popular with the speed of industrialization and urbanization—the need of men and women to annex a piece of eternity in order to keep their bearings.

Nationalism, racism, and bourgeois society all sought to base themselves upon nature in order to partake of its immutability. Proust tells the story of how he thought a friend cured of his homosexuality after he had spent a hard day riding, had climbed a moun-

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tain, and slept in the snow.¹⁸ Here the healing power of serene nature had supposedly routed nervousness, and youthful energy had overcome exhaustion. Nature knows no vice, and in this context it seems less bizarre to find sexologists discussing among themselves whether or not homosexual animals existed. Such animals would put a blemish on nature, and indeed their existence did provide homosexuals with an argument against respectability.¹⁹

Conspiracies were supposedly the rule in big cities, linking those hostile to society with their immoral environment. Immorality and conspiracy were closely associated throughout the nineteenth century. During the French Revolution, as we saw, Germans had complained that the French were robbing them of morality, while some English, with greater imagination, held that France sent dancers across the Channel to corrupt the nation with their lewd gestures.²⁰ Proust called homosexuality a freemasonry more powerful, more extensive, and less suspect than the orthodox one. Just before the First World War, Maximilian Harden described a supposed homosexual conspiracy in the imperial German government in words that could have been taken from any racist tract about the Jews: "Everywhere there are men of this tribe, in courts, in high positions in the army and navy, in ateliers, in the editorial rooms of large newspapers . . . merchants, teachers and even judges. All united against their common enemy."²¹ The conspiracy of homosexuals to subvert society ran parallel to the universal world Jewish conspiracy, both Jews and homosexuals were regarded by their enemies as a "state within a state." Racism did not invent conspiracy theories any more than it invented stereotypes. It simply used them as one more factor to lock inferior races and the "racially degenerate" into place.

The subverters of the bourgeois order represented the "anti-type" as against the "ideal-type" of youth, energy, and beauty—the clean-cut German or Englishman. True beauty stood in sharp contrast to the so-called lower passions and material things. An unbridgeable gulf exists, we hear in 1896, between perfect beauty and the desire to perform sexual acts with such beauty.²² At much the same time Walter Pater was remarking that the very whiteness of Greek sculpture, as Winckelmann had described it, stripped nudity of its sensuousness.²³ Human beauty without sensuousness—such was the basic demand of respectability, just as beauty itself was a sign of moral and spiritual superiority. Nietzsche castigated this respect-

able concept of bodily beauty as pale and idiotic and called for the worship of the human body in all its sensuousness, with all its desires, wherever they might lead. Yet at the same time he shared one of its fundamental presuppositions when he wrote that it was "sheer insanity to believe that anyone could carry a beautiful soul in a misshapen body."²⁴ Nietzsche also fell under the spell of Greek sculpture, even if he attempted to transcend the respectable nude through his image of the Superman, whom one artist at the end of the century depicted naked, monumental, with angels' wings and at his feet little dwarfs in academic dress. Here, in spite of Nietzsche's own love of the body, a feeling of chastity was conveyed by the symbols attached to the figure of "Nietzsche, the giant."²⁵

The ideal of beauty as symbolizing man's self-control reinforced the purifying gift of nature, whether in the form of national heroes like Walter Flex or Rupert Brooke or in the war memorial of the University of Munich, which was a copy of the sculpture of the youth Doryphorus by the Greek Polykletus. The symbolism of nature as reinforcing the ideal of manliness has been our constant theme. Leni Riefenstahl, much later, once again summed up the relationship between beauty and nature. The second part of her film on the Olympiad of 1936, *Festival of Beauty*, interposed shots of the beauties of nature with shots of the human body.²⁶ This was the apotheosis of manliness: young, virile, energetic, and chaste. Racism in propagating the Aryan ideal type stood on solid ground, supporting a stereotype basic to the existing order.

Here only the healthy and the normal could be beautiful, they alone could live in harmony with nature. Just as an energetic and vigorous homosexual was beyond imagination, so a beautiful Jew was regarded as a contradiction in terms, even though the beautiful Jewess continued to haunt the imagination—largely because of Scott's *Ivanhoe* and the need for the exotic and mysterious as elements of sexual stimulation. Johann Jakob Schudt in his influential *Jüdische Merkwürdigkeiten* (*Jewish Memorabilia*, 1715) had written that among a hundred Jews not one could be found without some blemish, some ugly feature.²⁷ This would become one of racism's most often repeated assertions. At Auschwitz, Dr. Josef Mengele carried out examinations upon young Jews who seemed to meet society's standard of human beauty partly in order to discover the ugly feature necessary to racism, and he rejoiced if he saw a

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clubfoot or suspected hereditary disease.²⁸ Through racism, the distinction between the normal and abnormal was driven to its logical conclusion. Just as medicine had legitimized standards of respectability from the beginning, so now some physicians sought to support racism. When Dr. P. Möbius proclaimed as an article of racial faith that "the healthy human being is mostly like and tall, his face is never ugly,"²⁹ we recall Oscar Wilde's taunt that the wicked are always ugly. But it was Oscar Wilde who went to prison, and Dr. Möbius, one suspects, who spoke for the image society liked to have of itself.

II

Yet the homogenization of outsiders was never perfected, despite the similarities we have analyzed. The differences in the way they were viewed by society were to have some consequences once racism gained power in Germany. The distinctions between society's perceptions of the Jew and the homosexual are illustrated in excellent fashion by the accusation of sterility leveled against them both. This was a serious accusation, given the fear of falling birth rates during the nineteenth century. In both cases Jews and homosexuals weakened society and the nation. It was not surprising that homosexuals should be accused of depriving the nation of its future soldiers and workers. Jews were not as a rule accused of being homosexual themselves; instead, they were endowed by their enemies with an uncontrolled sexual drive directed against gentle women. Through their lust they were thought to corrupt the nation's mothers, thus preventing the birth of healthy children. Moreover, Jews were accused of inventing birth control—another means of destroying the Aryan race. The condemnation of contraception by racists was not confined to Germany. Sidney Webb warned that unless the decline of the birth rate was averted, the English nation would fall to the Irish and the Jews.³⁰

While rarely accused of being homosexual, Jews were thought to have spread homosexuality in order to attain cultural dominance in Germany. This argument was popularized by the Nazi obsession with decadence as symbolizing abnormal appearance and behavior. But decadence had been equated with degeneration much earlier by physicians like Max Nordau, who characterized modern art as due

to shattered nerves or distortion of the eyeballs. Homosexuality, associated in any case with figures like Oscar Wilde or the permissiveness of Weimar Berlin, was easily identified as one of the causes of degeneration. Racism did the rest. For example, *Das Schwarze Korps*, the newspaper of the SS, wrote that "all of those who are different" cannot be creative because they lack all appreciation of nature. Thus Jews and homosexuals were working hand in hand to destroy all that was creative in man and so undermine his virility.³¹

Respectability and creativity were equated here. The outsiders were once more stereotyped, in spite of the fact that specific accusations of sexual perversion were for the most part not directed against the Jews. Of course there were exceptions, and the more enthusiastically exploited for all that, taken as witness for a connection which as a rule proved difficult to make. Magnus Hirschfeld, the sexologist, a Jew, and ever since the beginning of the twentieth century a leading figure of the homosexual emancipation movement, became a constant target of attack. His own name and that of the Institute for Sexual Science (*Institut für Sexualwissenschaft*), which he founded in 1919, were used as metaphors for sexual perversion, symbols of the threat to bourgeois respectability posed by Weimar Berlin. The Institute was concerned with the study of all sexual diseases, eugenics, and marital problems. But most spectacularly it concentrated upon the medical study of homosexuality, as well as hermaphroditism, and in addition functioned as a counseling center for homosexuals. Hirschfeld never publicly admitted to being a homosexual, though he lived with a friend, but it was his putative homosexuality which made Sigmund Freud call him flabby and unappetizing.³² The truly pioneering work of his Institute was recognized by only a few liberals, while German racists delighted in so easy a target. Besides Hirschfeld, Walther Rathenau, the Jew most prominent in German public life during and immediately after the First World War, was occasionally called a sadist and a homosexual. Yet it is surprising that these accusations occupied such a small and insignificant place in all the abuse directed against him, for Rathenau's sexual preferences were rumored about at the time. Rathenau himself never took a public stand on homosexual rights. His feelings were hidden. He praised blond Germans and sought out young friends for long conversations, but only his pas-

sionate and as yet unpublished correspondence with the blond Wilhelm Schwane, racist and hater of Jews, gives us a tantalizing glimpse into his repressed sexuality.³³

Still, Jews were not thought to endanger society by their supposed homosexuality but rather by their evil heterosexual drives. Why did racism leave the occasion almost unused to close the circle of vice around the Jews, outsiders accused of every conceivable crime, lacking control over their passions and tainted with insanity? Reality, however tenuous, must inform myth. Jewish family life was greatly admired by many anti-Semites because it was hard to ignore,³⁴ even when set side by side with the retention by anti-Semites of the old and isolated Jewish stereotype upon the German stage. Adolf Stoecker, one of the most famous anti-Semites in Wilhelminian Germany, conceded that Jewish life was centered upon the family while at the same time attacking the Jews for undermining Christian and Germany morality.³⁵ Jews, unlike other outsiders such as the insane or homosexuals, to the confusion of racists exemplified many of the virtues the bourgeois were supposed to possess. But while family life was intact among the Jews themselves, it was, so racists asserted, directed against the family life of others. Even though the outsider was a faithful family man, he was still a threat to existing society. The racist distinction between German bourgeoisie and Jewish bourgeoisie solved the problem presented by Jews successfully entering bourgeois life—for homosexuals such a problem never arose in the first place. Yet this was not the principal difference in the perception of Jews and homosexuals, though it was significant in all anti-Semitic and racist literature.

Their respective place in medicine was of special importance in defining the differences between the two kinds of outsiders at a time when, as we saw, physicians were tending to become the guardians of respectability. Jews, like homosexuals, became the topic of medical discussion during the nineteenth century. They were thought subject to mental illness, as we have seen, specifically nervousness and neurasthenia. Jean-Martin Charcot, the famed Paris physician and one of Freud's teachers, held that Jews were prone to such illness due to an inbred weakness of their nervous system, while Krafft-Ebing attributed this loss of nerve to inbreeding, a result of Jewish exclusiveness. Moreover, Krafft-Ebing tells us, these Jewish diseases led to religious fanaticism and an intensified sensuousness.³⁶

Thus the excessive sexuality ascribed to Jews found a medical explanation. These physicians, and especially Charcot, also believed that women suffered fits of hysteria because their nervous system was much weaker than that of men. Here learned physicians agreed with Otto Weininger—the self-hating Jew and racist whom we shall meet presently—in projecting female characteristics onto the Jews. Manliness, once again, meant normalcy; it exemplified that self-control and harmony of body and mind which society prized so much. Those not manly must be in some manner diseased.

This medical analysis of the Jews legitimized the Jewish stereotype. Racism made good use of such legitimization through science, proclaiming that the Jews could never be cured because nervousness was an integral part of their race. Krafft-Ebing and Charcot had been careful to qualify their "Jewish disease" as a tendency rather than an absolute, and had maintained that it could be cured. But for racism, a healthy Jew was a contradiction in terms. The outsider must be irrevocably fixed as exemplifying that restlessness, rootlessness, and lack of virility so feared by respectability.

Nevertheless, the medical stereotyping of the Jews was the exception rather than the rule; it was secondary to the many other arguments directed against them. For homosexuals, on the other hand, medical study was of central importance. They became the objects of an analysis from which there was no escape. Homosexuality was above all a disease like other diseases—so ran the common medical wisdom—acquired by masturbation or by infection through bad example (though by the end of the nineteenth century congenital homosexuality was beginning to be recognized). Even so, most homosexuals might be cured, while Jews were beyond redemption. Racists faced the dilemma that most homosexuals were Aryans even if they undermined the health of the nation.

In 1937, *Das Schwarze Korps* asserted that only 2 percent of all homosexuality was congenital, yet in accordance with medical theories which had asserted that homosexuality spread like an infectious disease, that 2 percent could be counted upon to corrupt 2 million Germans. While congenital homosexuals must be exterminated, the vast majority could be cured through hard work. *Das Schwarze Korps* considered them slackers, selfish men who could return to normal if they wished.³⁷ The treatment of the insane in the nineteenth century was in some ways similar to that of homo-

sexuals, within their respective medical categories. It was thought that establishment of control over the emotions would restore to the insane a normal facial expression as well. The ability to work hard eventually played an important part in saving the mentally ill from Nazi euthanasia.³⁸ Jews, of course, were considered unproductive, unable to do honest work, and could never be cured.

The Nazis gave homosexuals a chance to reform; but if they refused to do so, or could not comply, they were to be exterminated like the Jews. If a great many homosexuals and a handful of Jews survived in the end, it must not be forgotten that homosexuals proved difficult to recognize despite the efforts of forensic medicine, while most Jews were members of an established religious community which kept membership files. The Nazis did have some fragmentary lists of homosexuals at their disposal through the names of financial supporters printed in Magnus Hirschfeld's *Fahrbuch für Sexuelle Zwischenstufen*, though some of those listed may not have been homosexuals at all. In the last resort, the homogeneous stereotype was more important than the differences.

The grave accusation of confusing genders, directed with a kind of logic against homosexuals, was directed toward the Jews as well. We saw earlier how the division of labor between the sexes proved essential to the maintenance of respectability, and here again racism reinforced what had become commonplace in bourgeois society. It was usual to find racists proclaiming toward the end of the nineteenth century as an article of faith that "the more feminine women are, and the more masculine men, the more intimate the family life, the healthier the society and the state."³⁹ While some physicians believed that Jews shared with women a tendency to hysteria, as we have seen, it was a racist commonplace that Jews were aggressive toward the female sex, lecherous, and given to corrupting Christian girls. Yet despite such putative masculine aggression, the accusation of confusing genders leveled against the Jews remained intact as well; it was simply lifted from a practical to a theoretical plane. Jews lacked manliness as demonstrated by their nervousness, their failure to control the passions, and their treatment of women as goods to be bought and sold. Jewish materialism, their lack of soul, prevented them from distinguishing between love and lust, beauty and sensuousness. Once again the qualities of manliness coincided with the ideals of bourgeois society; they served to symbolize those manners and morals, that ideal of beauty

and energy, that made the difference between the normal and abnormality.

Otto Weininger's *Sex and Character* (1903) was one of the most influential racial tracts of the twentieth century, profoundly affecting the views of Adolf Hitler and many other racists. The characteristics of gender provided its principal argument. Weininger accepted Freud's contention of the bisexuality of children, and went on to argue that every human being contained within him male and female elements. Yet he sharply distinguished between the male and the female and assigned to each quite different characteristics. Women, for him, were totally preoccupied with their sexuality, whereas men knew how to be social, how to fight, how to debate—understood science, commerce, religion, and art.⁴⁰ Women never grew to maturity. All their lives, he wrote, they remain restless children. And Jews for him had a preponderance of female qualities, even though they were male in their practice of sex. Weininger's conclusion follows: For true men, sexuality plays a secondary role. The more lofty the morality, the smaller the place that sexuality occupies in human consciousness.⁴¹ Neither women nor Jews possess moral sense; they know only sexual passion.

Weininger removed the qualities of charm, femininity, and motherhood from the image of woman, leaving her a creature composed solely of passion and emotion. Those physicians concerned with female hysteria had not opposed the traditional feminine ideal. Indeed, they wanted to cure women and give them back their own dignity and self-control. But Weininger was a misogynist and a racist, who believed that to be either a Jew or a woman was a physiological state that could not be cured. *Sex and Character* was built upon the clear distinction between men and women—"Whatever intermediate forms of sexuality may exist, in the end a human being is either a man or a woman."⁴² Weininger succeeded in transforming the nineteenth-century ideal of woman into an evil force quite foreign to those who had built this image, yet still echoing romantic notions of the *femme fatale*.

Such notions owed nothing to nationalism. Weininger had a low opinion of Bismarck and German unification, and regarded all those who aspired to lead the people as ramblerousers.⁴³ *Sex and Character* seems rather to reflect the author's fear of his own bisexuality. As every human being contained something of both male and female, he himself might lack masculinity. Nevertheless, the

book lent itself easily to co-optation by nationalism, since its supposed psychological insights were dressed in racial garb. The fascination which Weininger's thesis exercised over so many men and women—not all of them nationalists—is startling and depressing. In the first place, the discussion of theories of sexuality was becoming both fashionable and respectable, and those inclined to racism found here a new, up-to-date argument, both scientific and emotional, dealing with basics. Weininger's book, like most racist tracts, was also meant as a criticism of contemporary culture, directed against the anarchy and decadence of his time, and that surely added to its attraction. Finally, his self-hate as a Jew and his suicide immediately after the book was published gave the work a certain notoriety.

Homosexuals were not forgotten in *Sex and Character*, providing further evidence of Weininger's need to defend manliness and its racist virtues against the "unmanly" who had corrupted culture and society. Like women and Jews, homosexuals lacked creativity and appreciation for the genuine in life. They craved "the pose, the audience, the theater," and lived for the fleeting moment, while for the true male, "only timeless objects have value."⁴⁴ Homosexuals were thought to live in an artificial world which, like life in the big city, signaled a criminal temperament. "That is why the homosexual is a criminal."⁴⁵

We have seen how such analogies became widespread, part of the stereotyping of all outsiders. History could not be invoked by those wanting to prove the habitual criminality of homosexuals because their spiritual ancestors, the Greeks, had been cleansed and appropriated by respectable society. The homosexuals were deprived of a specific past, but neither could they be accused of having an inherited predilection for criminal acts. Homosexuals, after all, shared the Aryan past, and the views of medical science had to take the place of history.

But the Jews had their own past, and the accusation of criminality against them was much more consistent than that leveled against homosexuals. Here racism could make full use of its appeal to history. Racist theorists turned back to those Jewish gangs of thieves who had worked hand in glove with their German colleagues during most of the eighteenth century. Friedrich Christian Avé-Lallemant in *Das Deutsche Gaunertum* had demonstrated that the vocabulary of the German underworld was filled with Hebrew

and Yiddish expressions. Lallemant was no anti-Semite and certainly no racist; he stated explicitly that there were no specific Jewish criminal characteristics.⁴⁶ Racists discarded such opinions, however, and used instead the existence of Jewish gangs in the past, and the persistence of Hebrew and Yiddish slang among German criminals, in order to demonstrate that Jews were "born crooks." Some racists, once again making a connection with illicit sexuality, asserted that contemporary pimps communicated through a "Jewish secret language."⁴⁷ The final consequence of this linkage between Jews and criminals awaited racism in power. Then those engaged in euthanasia would ask asylums to single out—besides the mentally ill—both Jews and habitual criminals.⁴⁸

Lombrosian psychology, elaborated chiefly during the 1860s, made the accusation of Jewish criminality still more meaningful. Cesare Lombroso had maintained that habitual criminals were easily recognizable through certain bodily deformities; for example, handle-shaped ears, Lombroso tells us, were "found in criminals, savages and apes" and, so racists added, among Jews as well.⁴⁹ Racists liked nothing better than to use doctored pictures of Jews in order to demand rhetorically, Do they not look like criminals? The sexual passions with which Jews were endowed were part of their putative criminality. Despite the homosexual scandals at the turn of the century—the Wilde trials and the Cleveland Street scandal in England, and the Eulenburg affair in Germany—homosexuality and criminality never became so closely associated. Both Jews and homosexuals were supposed to conspire against society and both were perceived as enemies of respectability. But the specific accusation of criminality against Jews made their defamation easier. It was an accusation racists did their best to encourage precisely because it could be so effectively exploited.

III

Lombroso held that as criminality was part of the habitual criminal's physiology and could never be changed, he must be executed. The death of the outsider was never far from the imagination of those inside society. The young masturbator in agony in Bertrand's museum demonstrated the wages of sin, while a fixed and deathlike gloom was said to dominate the facial expression of the insane.⁵⁰ All seemed close to death—the Jews prematurely old, the homo-