German Orientalism

The study of the Middle East and Islam from 1800 to 1945

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Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

as language family necessarily sidelined Turkish studies.[25] When the concern for the language family faded, the conceptual option for Turkish studies as a distinct field of specialization arose. A similar development can be observed with regard to Iranian studies. As Indo-European language, Persian remained a side issue in Near East studies geared towards the Semitic language family. After the transition, a research focus on Iranian studies could even be represented at the discipline's core, as Hans Heinrich Schaeder illustrates.

The second factor for the institutional "failure" of Islamic studies may be a relative lack of spectacular artifacts. Undoubtedly a great number of objects from the Middle East were available (maybe even, too many). But nothing related to the field resembled the huge excavation projects for the ancient periods, the finds of which completely captured public imagination and secured state funding. The only major public event of the Islamic period was the great exhibition of Islamic art at Munich in 1910, which attracted wide public interest, and paved the way for the rise of the study of Islamic art history. Thus Islamic studies did not partake in the national quest for the possession of impressive artifacts for museum exhibitions that came to be seen as essential paraphernalia of the empire. Contrary to the first-sight impression, Islamic studies do not appear to have emerged as direct result of political colonial aspirations. In light of the discussion here, the field should rather be seen as "fallout" from the transformations of other disciplines that were caused and facilitated by the establishment of the territorial state and its imperial projects.

8 The primacy of political factors

1933–45

This last stage in the historical account concerns the developments from 1933 until 1945. During that period, the social and cultural dynamics at the universities which had determined the history of Middle East studies were overridden by outright political force, which in its most immediate form entailed the exclusion of university teachers and students on the grounds of so-called race, religion, and/or political convictions. Though much work still needs to be done, university history under the NS regime has received considerable scholarly attention in recent decades (e.g., Adam 1977; Beyerchen 1977; Losemann 1977; Heinemann 1980; Vezina 1982; Tröger 1984; Lundgreen 1985; Näf 1986, 2001; Becker *et al.* 1987/1998, Burleigh 1988; Titze 1989: 224–38; Krause *et al.* 1991; Heiber 1991–94; Chroust 1994, 2006; Gerstengrabe 1994; Hammerstein 1995, 1999; Marchand 1996: 340–54; Jehle 1996; Wegeler 1996; Nagel 2000; Hausmann 2001, 2002, 2003, 1998/2007; Junginger 1999, 2008).

In addition to studies that deal with specific topics (e.g., Brentjes 1985; Freimark 1991; Kreiser 1998b; Rohde 2000), several accounts are available that deal with Middle East or Oriental studies as a whole. Ekkehard Ellinger's dissertation on the subject, published in 2006, is the most elaborate one. Though it contains a wealth of information, Ellinger's study does not relate to the research undertaken by Ludmila Hanisch on the period both with regard to the development within the field and the scholars who were excluded (Hanisch 2001, 2003). This might be due to the fact that Ellinger's dissertation was completed in 2003. Moreover, there might be a problem of compatibility. Hanisch undertakes a thorough and well-documented survey, but she refrains from making any overall evaluation. By contrast, Ellinger's study is meant to challenge what he presents as the hegemonic view on Oriental studies during the NS regime. He argues that this part of the history has widely been ignored and that the discipline's involvement with the NS regime tends to be downplayed, while his own study aims to show close interrelations between Oriental studies and the NS regime as well as the continuity after 1945 (2006: 419–23, 435–53). Without taking a stand with regard to the overall evaluation, Hanisch documents the involvement and the interrelations of scholars in the field with the NS regime. In that sense, her work does not fit into the "hegemonic trend" against which Ellinger sets his argument. By contrast, the brief accounts by Rudi Paret (1968) and Baber Johansen (1990), which are

almost entirely limited to general assessments, can more easily be employed as counter-narratives.

Paret divides his survey of scholarly achievements into two major parts: the developments "up to the thirties" and "German Oriental Studies since 1933." Between these two parts, Paret inserts a short passage containing a general evaluation of the NS period (1968: 44–46). Apart from the suffering caused by persecution, he stresses the hardship endured by scholars who remained in Nazi Germany:

> The result of all this was not only a noticeable reduction in the ranks of German Orientalists, but also the uncomfortable feeling for those who stayed behind that they were proscribed in the society of the free world. With the outbreak of the Second World War the crisis grew to new proportions. Death brought gaps in the ranks of those who stayed behind living as spiritual outsiders. After the war had ended and the world learnt the horrors of what had happened in the concentration camps, we felt as if we had been thrown into a ghetto. On top of the hunger and cold there was the odium of being a German and thus responsible in part for the horrors of the National Socialist regime.
>
> (Paret 1968: 45)

Whether or not they were persecuted by the NS regime, scholars of Middle East studies as such were victims of the circumstances; they were no perpetrators, not even collaborators. Apart from that, the scholars just continued to pursue their studies: "German Oriental Studies since 1933" until the present.

Johansen approaches the issue from a quite different perspective on German history. Any equation between the victims of NS persecution and those who remained in Nazi Germany without resisting is unacceptable. Therefore, Johansen divides his account of the period into two parts: "The Persecution" and "Nazi Culture and Oriental studies." In the second part, Johansen attempts to show that there was an inherent distance between Oriental studies and the NS regime. He argues that

> In the field of cultural policy the Nazis followed the principle of restraining the possibility of studying cultures, religions, and histories of peoples that were, as they said, alien to the German species. For that reason they closed down the Oriental Institute[s] at Giessen [and at Kiel].
>
> (Johansen 1990: 91)

Due to the regime's hostile attitude, scholars in Middle East studies were not attracted to Nazism, with the exception of some individual scholars, mostly specializing in Turkish and Iranian studies.

At the beginning of the Second World War, the regime improved the work conditions for Oriental studies for practical political reasons. Although scholars in Oriental studies participated in a special war effort of the humanities, the "representative" of the ministry of education, Paul Ritterbusch reprimanded them at their convention in 1942, for claiming funds that would better serve the study of German history.

> Oriental studies reacted in abandoning areas that were thought of as ideological committed [...] Those areas of Oriental research that since the nineteenth century constituted Oriental studies and were considered to be nonpolitical and purely scholarly fields attracted most Orientalists.
>
> (Johansen 1990: 91–92)

Thus the ideological hostility of the NS regime towards Oriental studies caused most scholars to keep their distance from Nazism; their strategy of avoidance in form of a retreat into pure scholarship led the discipline to abandon all new research trends and to return to its nineteenth-century format.

Against this background, Ellinger sets himself a huge task. He aims at documenting the exclusion of scholars, the degree of collaboration of the other scholars with the NS regime, the transformation of the institutional framework of the discipline undertaken by the NS regime as well as the integration of scholarly research into a coherent NS ideology. As to be expected, such an all-inclusive goal cannot be fully achieved by one study, even if it is a sizeable work of some 600 pages. Thus short-cuts are inevitable: on the issue of individual collaboration, Ellinger relies on samples, without being able to tell how widespread or representative they were (Ellinger 2006: 41). The discussion of the institutional development focuses mostly on Berlin and to some degree on Vienna (2006: 164). In order to achieve the integration of the waste amount of data, a strong emphasis is put on a lineal development which presupposes a more unified system than it might have been. This limitation is particularly visible in the discussion of the regime's institutional policy and in the investigation of the interrelation between research and NS ideology (2006: 277–418).

In this chapter, I attempt to consider to what extent the findings of Ellinger's study and Hanisch's survey corroborate or challenge Paret's and Johansen's evaluations, or which alternative conclusions may be drawn, especially with regard to the extent of continuity and the emergence of new patterns and dynamics within the field at the university. The discussion will focus on five issues: the persecution; the conceptual development of the discipline; NS policy regarding Oriental studies; NS projects involving Oriental studies; and the cooperation between scholars and the regime.

Persecution

Apart from such measures as denunciation, mobbing and acts of terror based on local "initiatives" (e.g., Faust 1973; Rürup 1993; Diewald-Kerkmann 1995; Kahle 1998; Bäumler 1999), persecution generally occurred in the form of a gradual process which intensified in waves mostly following legislation. The "law for the restitution of the civil service" (*Gesetz zur Wiederherstellung des Berufsbeamtentums*, April 7, 1933) provided the basis for the dismissal of civil servants who were

considered to be politically unreliable and those of Jewish origin unless their appointments had been made before the First World War or they had served in the army during the war. The law extended not only to civil servants proper, as for example tenured teachers at universities, but also to institutions which received state funding (e.g., the academies of sciences, the German archaeological institute, and the *DMG*). The first wave of dismissals occurred from April to August 1933. Another one[1] followed the *Reichsbürgergesetz* (the "law [re]defining German citizenship," September 15, 1935) and a related regulation (issued September 30) which decreed the dismissal of all civil servants who were considered Jewish. On April 15, 1937, the ministry of education issued a regulation prohibiting the admission of German students of Jewish origin to doctoral degree programs.

According to Ellinger's findings (2006: 424–35), only a few scholars who lost their employment on the basis of the NS legislation remained in Germany: Werner Caskel (1896–1970), Wolfgang Lentz (1900–86), Max Freiherr von Oppenheim (1860–1946), and the librarians Hans Rasp (1895–1966) and Erich Schröter (1868–1965). Three scholars of the field were murdered in concentration camps: the Ph.D. candidate Hedwig Klein (1911-probably 1942), the specialist for Iranian studies Fritz Wolff (1880-probably 1943) and the librarian Arthur Spanier (1889–1944). Other scholars who lost their employment or could not find employment due to NS legislation were able to emigrate, mostly to the USA, Britain, Palestine, and Turkey: Robert Anhegger (b. 1911), Franz Babinger (1891–1967), Frederick Perez Bargebuhr (1904–78), Max Meir Moshe Bravmann (1909–78), Richard Ettinghausen (1906–79), Anton Freimann (1871–1948), Ernst Daniel Goldschmidt (1895–1972), Hans Ludwig Gottschalk (1904–81), Walter Gottschalk (1891–1974), Gustave von Grunebaum (1909–72), Ernst Emil Herzfeld (1879–1948), Ernst Honigmann (1892–1954), Paul Kahle (1875–1964), Paul Kraus (1904–44), Robert Lachmann (1892–1939), Julius Lewy (1895–1963), Ilse Lichtenstadter (1907–91), Heinrich Eliakim Löwe (1869–1951), Eugen Mittwoch (1876–1942), Hermann Pick (1879–1952), Martin Plessner (1900–73), Erwin Isaac Jacob Rosenthal (1904–91), Franz Rosenthal (1914–2003), Joseph Schacht (1902–69), Karl Süssheim (1878–1947), Andreas Tietze (1914–2003), Richard Walzer (1900–75), Gotthold Weil (1882–1960) and Paul Wittek (1894–1978).

According to my own survey drawing on publications on the Middle East and university employments, the following scholars may be added to the list of victims of exclusion: Berthold Altaner (1885–1964), Rudolf Anthes (1896–1985), Anton Baumstark (1872–1948),[2] Adolf Erman (1854–1937), Bernhard Geiger (1881–1964), Albrecht Götze (1897–1971), Hans Gustav Güterbock (1908–2000), Julius Yitzchak Guttmann (1880–1950), Gustav Haloun (1898–1951), Walter B. Henning (1908–67), Joseph Henninger (1906–93), Hans Hickmann (1908–68), Ernst Eduard Hirsch (1902–85), Gustav Hölscher (1877–1955),[3] Rolf Italiaander (1913–91), Tadeusz Kowalski (1889–1948),[4] Fritz Rudolf Kraus (1910–91), Fritz Krenkow (1872–1952), Benno Landsberger (1890–1968), Kurt Levy (1907–35),[5] Heinrich Lüders (1869–1943), Karl Menges (1908–99), Theodor Menzel (1878–1939),[6] Hans Wolfgang Müller (1907–91), Julian Obermann (1888–1956), Salomon Pinès (1908–89), Hermann Ranke (1878–1953), Carl Rathjens (1887–1966), Friedrich Rosen (1856–1935), Walter Ruben (1899–1982), Isidor Scheftelowitz (1875–1934), Lucian Scherman (1864–1946), Bruno Schindler (1882–1964), Alfred Siggel (1884–1959), Otto Stein (1893–1942), Georg Steindorff (1861–1951), Otto Strauss (1881–1940), Egon Joseph Wellesz (1885–1974), Hans Alexander Winkler (1900–45),[7] and Heinrich Zimmer (1890–1943).

Hanisch has calculated that between 1933 and 1938 25 percent of all *ordinarii* of Middle East studies were dismissed on the grounds of so-called race, religion, and/or political convictions (2003: 118). In addition to an account of the individual cases (2003: 116–26), she attempts to evaluate the consequences of the expulsion ("*Konsequenzen der Vertreibung*") (2003: 134–43). For that purpose, she surveys the appointments made between 1933 and 1939 (see also Appendix 3), and investigates the fields of research. With regard to the latter, she comes to the conclusion that despite minor changes resulting from the departure of scholars (including both scholars who were dismissed and those who retired/died), continuity prevailed in most fields (Hanisch 2003: 136). Moreover, she observes that some fields of research became considered less important, which led to a reduction in research, although there was no lack of competent scholars (2003: 140–41).

Ellinger does not address the issue comprehensively. Although the expulsions are documented, no immediate consequences for the institutional development are discussed in detail. It seems, however, that Ellinger concurs with Hanisch's assessment, when he comes to the conclusion that in general terms teaching and research at the universities remained constant until the beginning of the war in 1939, which led to a marked reduction, especially due to the recruitment of scholars for active military service (2006:185). Although the investigation of scholarly writings constitutes a major part of the study (2006: 277–418), the question of what difference the writings of the excluded scholars (might have) made is not considered.

On the basis of what is currently known, it would seem that the expulsions caused no major transformation of the field, while providing employment opportunities for those who were not targeted. For those who were expelled, the consequences were surely different ones, though they cannot adequately be evaluated in terms of disciplinary history. Thus research on the contributions that some of these scholars were able to make in the development of their academic fields in the countries to which they emigrated is very valuable and deserves further attention (e.g., Pross 1955; Radkau 1971; Widmann 1973; Neumark 1980, Hoffmann 1981; Hirschfeld 1983; Bolbecher 1995; Krohn 1987/1993; Strauss *et al.* 1991; Cremer and Przytulla 1991; Böhne and Motzkau-Valeton 1992; Schwartz 1995; Boyaz 2001). But this line of inquiry can only provide a partial picture that needs to be supplemented by research on the fate of individual persecuted scholars, as for example Joel Kraemer's study on Paul Kraus (1999).

Developments in the conception of the discipline

While the expulsion of colleagues was no cause for public protest, not even a topic for a public debate, scholars in the field turned their attention to a conceptual

debate—an issue that has never before been addressed in such intensity. The debate began when Franz Babinger, who was teaching at the *SOS*, and Walther Hinz (1906–92), who was working at the Prussian ministry of education, submitted a report to the ministries of education in Prussia, Bavaria, and Saxony (May 15, 1933). It was entitled "Oriental studies in the new Germany—State of the art and future tasks." They suggested promoting three major centers for Oriental studies, namely at Berlin, Leipzig, and Munich and placing an emphasis on historical and contemporary research (Hanisch 2003: 144; Ellinger 2006: 150–51).

Very critical replies followed. Scholars at Leipzig, August Fischer (1865–1949), Erich Bräunlich (1892–1945), and Benno Landsberger, defended the central importance of philology and argued that knowledge of the contemporary Middle East should be acquired by traveling (or reading travel reports), not during studies at the university (Hanisch 2003: 144–45). Hans Heinrich Schaeder (1896–1957) at Berlin, Rudolf Strothmann (1877–1960) at Hamburg, and Enno Littmann (1875–1958) at Tübingen aimed their criticism at the suggestion of concentrating Oriental studies at three universities only (2003: 145–46). As *ordinarius* for Semitic languages, head of the institute of Oriental studies at Bonn and secretary of the *DMG*, Paul Kahle wrote an alternative report on Oriental studies in Germany (encompassing the entire Orient) for the German ministry of education (*REM*) in April 1935, in which he warned against excessive specialization. Kahle's review of the discipline stressed the need to refrain from further dismissals. Policy should aim at increasing the number of teaching staff and at combating the lack of young scholars (2003: 146–47).

Ellinger presents the debate differently (2006: 150–56). He focuses on the proposal by Babinger and Hinz and on Kahle's report. In his view, they present the two ends of a spectrum: while Kahle aims at the preservation of the discipline, Babinger and Hinz represent the program to transform the discipline according to National Socialism (2006: 155–56). While the assessment of Kahle's report is unproblematic, there may be room for doubt with regard to the characterization of the proposal submitted by Babinger and Hinz as "the NS program" for Oriental studies. They certainly tried to sell their proposal as suitable for a program of NS policy. But that is primarily a sign of opportunism, while its NS character still needs to be proven. For example, Hellmut Ritter (1892–1971), who had lost his university position at Hamburg in 1926 for being homosexual and found employment at the Orient institute of the *DMG* in Istanbul since 1928, faced the thread of losing his livelihood in 1933, when the Prussian ministry of education decided to withdraw the funding for the Orient institute of which Ritter was the sole employee. In order to secure further financial support, he offered his services for NS propaganda purposes. Although the funding was restored, Ritter appears not to have been taken up on his offer. Despite this remarkable act of opportunism, Ritter can hardly be characterized as NS representative (Lier 1998; Ellinger 2006: 201–2).

By contrast, some of the critics of the proposal made by Babinger and Hinz can be said to have had clear NS credentials. It is therefore of note that Ellinger chooses not to discuss or even mention the sharp criticism raised by Fischer, former *ordinarius* at Leipzig, in this context. According to Ellinger's findings, Fischer

was a committed Nazi who had joined the NSDAP at an early stage (Ellinger 2006: 36). He was also one of the signatures of the "declaration of loyalty to Adolf Hitler and the NS state by professors at German universities and colleges" which was published in Leipzig in 1933 by the NS teachers association of Saxony (2006: 48–49). Also others critics, especially Schaeder and Bräunlich, can be seen as having worked well within the NS framework, and also Ellinger presents them as such elsewhere throughout his study. Therefore it remains unclear at this stage why the proposal submitted by Babinger and Hinz should be seen as representing NS policy, while the conceptions voiced by its critics are not. In the course of the discussion of the institutional development that follows it becomes clear, however, that Ellinger singled out the proposal by Babinger and Hinz because he wants to argue that it was actually implemented (2006: 186–87).

In light of their differences with regard to the evaluation of the proposal, Ellinger and Hanisch follow different narrative strategies for their further investigation. Here the discussion will follow first Hanisch and then turn to Ellinger. Hanisch presents the proposal by Babinber and Hinz as the first contribution to a long conceptual debate in the field. After the immediate (critical) reactions to it came Kahle's report, which Ellinger presents as the opposite side of the spectrum. From there, Hanisch continues her review of the debate.

A series of six public lectures entitled "German Oriental studies, their current importance and tasks" was held at Berlin, October 1934 to February 1935 (Hanisch 2003: 149). The German Orient association in Berlin organized the lectures in cooperation with the local sections of the *DMG*, the Near Eastern–Egyptian society, the German Orient society, the society of the ancient Orient, the German society for Islamic studies, the society for East Asian art and the association for the Far East.[8] The lectures divided Oriental studies into six sub-disciplines: *der Alte Orient* (the ancient Orient/Middle East); *der Neuere Orient* (literally: the more recent Orient, defined as the Middle East since Alexander the Great; half of the lecture deals with the developments in the twentieth century); Islamic art; India; China; East Asian art. The lectures were published under the title: *Der Orient und Wir* (The Orient and us) (Deutscher Orient-Verein 1935).

In 1942, Enno Littmann presented a review of the German contribution to research on the Near East (1942),[9] which was rather similar to his previous account from 1930 (Littmann 1930). In comparison, Littmann mentioned fewer scholars by name in the publication of 1942. Ignaz Goldziher vanished completely, and Eugen Mittwoch became less visible. One might still consider this a courageous act, as Arthur Schaade (1883–1952) did in 1943, in light of the official instruction not to cite Jewish authors or their works. Another adaptation to the altered circumstances was the disappearance of the term "Semitic" (as in *Semitische Philologie*). Instead, Littmann referred to the field as Arabic studies (Hanisch 2003: 155–56). Nothing in Littmann's text indicates, however, that the altered terminology was meant to entail a novel delineation of the field.

Also in 1942, an Orientalist convention was held at Berlin, in the framework of the so-called *Kriegseinsatz der Geisteswissenschaften* (the humanities' mobilization for/contribution to the war). In most cases, the lectures presented an overview of

past achievements in each specific field rather than any current research projects. As Hanisch observes, the only hint at the concrete historical context, in which these lectures were held/written, is the omission of the contributions of "non-Aryan" scholars in the accounts (2003: 171). Due to war-time difficulties, the lectures were published only in 1944—in two volumes, or more precisely, not in one volume. One collection, edited by Schaeder, was published under the title *Der Orient in deutscher Forschung. Vorträge der Berliner Orientalistentagung, Herbst 1942* (The Orient in German research. Lectures held at the Orientalist convention in Berlin, autumn 1942). The editor's preface explains the context in which the lectures were held, but does not mention that not all lectures presented at the Orientalist convention are included in the collection. There is no reference to any second volume. By placing Ritterbusch's opening address at the beginning and the concluding remarks of the official organizer, Walther Wüst, at the end, the collection gives the impression that it presents the printed version of the entire event.

The six lectures excluded dealt with Semitic and Islamic studies. It seems rather unlikely that they were not included for technical reasons. Schaeder's collection consists of 261 pages. It would have been feasible to add another 60 pages. It is more likely that the decision was informed by the intention to endear Oriental studies to the German public without upsetting Nazi sentiment by reference to anything Semitic. Apparently in return for such consideration, funds were made available to publish not only the six lectures in a separate volume, but to add another nine articles. Given the constraints at the time, this was a very generous arrangement. The collection, in which the editors Richard Hartmann (1881–1965) and Helmut Scheel (1895–1967) state that it is "the second volume," is entitled *Beiträge zur Arabistik, Semitistik und Islamwissenschaft* (contributions on Arabic, Semitic, and Islamic studies). According to the institutional practice of the field at the time, the title should have been Semitic and Islamic studies.

As mentioned in the introduction, many universities replaced the term Semitic studies with Oriental studies after 1933 (Hanisch 2003: 141–43). The University of Berlin decided to replace the term Semitic by Arabic in the name of the institute for Semitic and Islamic studies to accommodate the new ideological sentiment since 1933. In Hanisch's view, this was a change in name only (2003: 142). She bases her evaluation on the delineation of appointments. By contrast, Ellinger holds that there was a structural change, drawing on the titles of lectures for his interpretation. In his view, the fact that Hebrew was no longer taught (or at least, did not appear in the course titles) proves that the concept of Semitic languages was abandoned (2006: 167). Despite the fact that the evidence is rather weak (we do not know what was actually taught), Ellinger's findings would suggest a change in practice, that is as such not surprising under the circumstances. Such a change in practice might eventually lead to an institutional transformation. But that would require additional evidence, which has not yet come to light.

In 1942, Enno Littmann had opted for the same strategy in his account of the field, without any manifest intention to alter the field's delineation. Hartmann and Scheel (1944) could not possibly make Semitic studies disappear, but they tried to make it less visible by bracketing it between Arabic and Islamic studies.

For that purpose, a sub-discipline called Arabic studies had to be established. On Hartmann's request (Hanisch 2003: 172–73), Johann Fück (1894–1974) wrote the history of Arabic studies for the volume and thus invented the tradition. Fück's contribution became the basis of his book which he published in 1955. When the volume was published in 1944, it remained without impact due to the circumstances of the final stages of the war and the immediate post-war era. Thus Arabic studies had to be invented for a second time.

In light of such an intensive conceptual debate, the high degree of continuity in the actual practice of the field may be surprising. Hanisch finds that, apart from a very few exceptions, the titles of courses offered in Oriental studies did not differ much from those listed before 1933 (2003: 152–53). Hanisch's survey of the contributions to the *ZDMG* (2003: 154–55) found that certain topics vanished, just as a considerable number of scholars/authors. Caucasian languages were a newly introduced topic. In addition, she found no evidence for any substantial influence of NS ideology. She ascribes this to the explicit policy of Paul Kahle, who was the editor from 1933 until 1938, as well as to the journal's traditional lack of interest in anthropological issues. The latter cannot be attributed to a lack of scholars interested in race issues, as the examples of the Arthur Ungnad (1879–1945) and Wilhelm Hoenerbach (1911–91) illustrate.

Ellinger comes to a similar conclusion. He investigates the cooperation between the *DMG*, which was the most comprehensive association of scholars in Oriental studies, and the NS regime (2006: 77–86). He shows that the *DMG* came under official control with regard to the regulation regarding membership, which means that "non-Aryans" were excluded, and to the composition of the board and that it cooperated with the authorities in various projects. In return for its cooperation, the *DMG* received state funding. Despite its close relations with the NS regime, the official journal, the *ZDMG*, remained non-political and published almost exclusively philological-historical studies that followed international standards. According to Ellinger, this holds true not only for the time Kahle was the editor, but also from 1939 until 1944, when Scheel, who was an employee of the *REM*, was in charge (2006: 78).

Hanisch also surveys the annual meetings of the *DMG* and especially the lectures presented there. The list of the participants clearly shows the absence of persecuted scholars at the annual meeting in 1936. The meeting was opened with a pledge of allegiance to Hitler. Otherwise, neither the topics nor the approach of the lectures differed from those presented at the time of the Weimar Republic (2003: 153). The Swedish scholar Henrik Samuel Nyberg (1889–1974), who participated at the annual meeting in 1937, observed that Assyriology was no longer a major field of research, while Iranian studies took the center stage (2003: 153). The annual meeting in 1938 was attended by fifteen foreign scholars and had as a whole an international scholarly format. Two lectures dealt with race issues, one (on the Aryan contribution to Indian philosophy) as a positive approach and one (on races in early Babylonian period) from a critical perspective (2003: 153–54). Only one further meeting took place, namely the convention held at Berlin in 1942.

Her investigation of the fields of research leads Hanisch to the conclusion that despite minor changes, continuity prevailed in most fields (2003: 136). Specifically, she found a decline in interest in Islamic theology/religion, which she ascribes to a more general trend. At the turn of the century, religion was considered a major historical factor. By contrast, religion was seen as obscuring the true historical essentials, namely tribal/national characteristics, in the collection of 1944 (2003: 136–37). The shift may not have been so drastic, however, considering that Richard Hartmann did not lose his interest in religion, and Walter Braune (1900–88) focused on Sufism in both his doctoral dissertation and his *Habilitation*. But other scholars, who had also been interested in Sufism, were no longer part of the professional circle: Hellmut Ritter, Max Horten (1874–1945), Georg Jacob (1862–1937) and Rudolf Tschudi (1884–1960) (Hanisch 2003: 138).

Research on Islamic law lost its main representatives, namely Gotthelf Bergsträsser (1886–1933) and Joseph Schacht. Though interested in the subject, Wilhelm Heffening (1894–1944) had no major impact (Hanisch 2003: 138). Similarly, research on Arab sciences lost its major specialists: Paul Kraus, Martin Plessner, and Salomon Pines, while Karl Garbers (1898–1990) and Alfred Siggel (1884–1959) entered the field (2003: 139). Hanisch also finds that there was no further interest in the Greek/Hellenist heritage in Islam (2003: 139), – though H.H. Schaeder was a prominent exception.

Assyriology lost several of its leading specialists, some of whom found employment in Turkey. In Germany, the emphasis is seen to have shifted to Hittite studies, probably attributable to the fact that the Hittites belonged to the "Indo-Germanic nations," – as is also been stressed by Ellinger (2006: 300–309). In his account, the major proponent of that trend is Viktor Christian (1885–1963), who had been suspended at Vienna due to his pro-Nazi activities from 1934 until 1936. After the "*Anschluss*," he became a member of the NSDAP, held leading positions at the University of Vienna, in addition to his central role in the discipline of Oriental studies there; he was a *Oberscharführer* (Senior Squad Leader) in the SS and played a leading role in the *Ahnenerbe*, the research institute of the SS. Therefore, it is not surprising when Ellinger finds that Christian was interested in establishing the non-Semitic character of ancient civilizations in the Orient (2006: 303–9). Christian's career is certainly a good example for the decisive influence of political factors on university developments. It would still be necessary to show that the developments at Vienna affected also other universities in order to argue a transformation of Assyriology.

Hanisch bases her evaluation on the appointment of Johann Friedrich (1893–1972) at Leipzig in 1936 (2003: 139–40). This argument may be open to challenge (see Appendix 3), considering that Hittite studies were already represented at Leipzig by Franz Heinrich Weissbach who had been *extraordinarius* for Assyriology since 1905, became honorary professor with special interest in Hittite studies in 1930. Friedrich had been *extraordinarius* (without tenure) at Leipzig since 1929. Thus an emphasis on Hittite studies had existed at Leipzig well before 1933. When Benno Landsberger was dismissed in 1935, the faculty may have decided to promote Friedrich as a valued member of their teaching staff. The reference to the Indo-European lineage of the Hittites in the letter to the ministry shows that it was considered a good strategy. But there is no evidence that it was more than a strategy, as also Hanisch implicitly admits (2003: 140 n. 496).

Hanisch suggest that Leipzig was not a unique case. She observes a similar "reorientation" at Berlin, when Victor Christian was suggested as successor to Bruno Meissner (1868–1947) after his retirement in 1935 (2003: 140). But the developments at Berlin seem even less conclusive than those at Leipzig. Given that Christian had been suspended from his university position for his pro-*Nazi* political activities in 1934, it is rather likely that the attempt to appoint him at Berlin was motivated by the intention to help a fellow *Nazi*, rather than any particular concern for Hittite studies. In 1937, when Christian resumed his position at Vienna, Adam Falkenstein (1906–66) was appointed lecturer, rather than *extraordinarius* as one might expect in light of the fact that he had been lecturer at Munich since 1930. It seems also unlikely that the promotion was withheld for lack of ideological commitment. Ellinger finds that Falkenstein favored a non-Semitic origin of the cuneiform script (2006: 302–3). Hans Ehelolf (1891–1939) remained honorary professor for Hittite studies, a position he held since 1930, until his death in 1939. In 1940, Emil Forrer (1894–1986) was employed only as lecturer, although he had already held such a position at Berlin in 1925 and had taught Hittite studies at the University of Chicago and Johns Hopkins University, 1929–34. A lack of ideological commitment is not likely to have been the reason for Forrer's low-ranking position, considering that he worked at Alfred Rosenberg's *Hohe Schule* since 1943. In 1940, Wolfram Freiherr von Soden (1908–96), who was the editor of the *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* (1936–45), was appointed to Meissner's chair. Also in this case, there was no lack of ideological commitment or political involvement; von Soden was one of rather rare cases of university teachers who were dismissed and barred from employment after 1945. At the same time, he is considered to have been a very gifted scholar. His great scholarly achievements provided the basis for the support of his former teacher, Benno Landsberger, who had been forced into exile during the NS regime, that helped to secure an appointment at Vienna in 1955 (Hanisch 2003: 207; *DBE* 9: 357). This leaves the possibility that the appointment at Berlin might have been due to scholarly merit, and that it was not just a matter of ideology and politics.

As a thriving field of specialization, Hittite studies cannot be explained by reference to any particular wealth of sources (the lack of sources is particularly emphasized in Schaeder 1944). Much of its attraction may well have been due to the Indo-European/Germanic lineage which could appeal to growing racist tendencies, including the National Socialists. But there is no evidence for a reorientation from Assyriology towards Hittite studies during the NS regime, especially considering that scholars of Assyriology such as Benno Landsberger, Julius Lewy, Hans Gustav Güterbock, who specialized in Hittite studies, Fritz Rudolf Kraus and Albrecht Götze were forced out of their positions, not for being scholars of Assyriology, but for being Jewish, and in Götze's case on account of his political views.

Moreover, the developments at Göttingen provide an example for the establishment of Assyriology, which had not existed previously (Appendix 3).

In 1934, Wolfram von Soden became lecturer in the field that was delineated as Assyriology, rather than Hittite studies as one might have expected if such a shift was taking place. Already in 1936, von Soden was promoted to *extraordinarius*. When he left for Berlin in 1940, he was replaced by Falkenstein who was assigned to teach Assyrian and Arabic studies. Thus while the personnel involved suggests a trend towards a reorientation on the basis of an ideological commitment, this transformation was not formalized in the delineation of the university positions.

Hanisch finds evidence for another decline, namely the research on Arabic poetry, which had been a major field at the turn of the century. Johann Fück did not continue the line of research begun in his *Habilitation* (1929); Erich Bräunlich, who held the chair at Leipzig since 1931 and was head of the institute, did not pursue his research on Arabic poetry, since he was preoccupied with administrative work, especially as dean of the faculty of philosophy (1937–40), and then with military espionage; and Werner Caskel had been dismissed from his position as lecturer at Greifswald in 1938 (Hanisch 2003: 140). It may be worthwhile considering that poetry was part of the philological framework, since Friedrich August Wolf (1759–1824) had turned it into a central device for dating and authenticating texts. The decline might be a consequence of the shift away from philology to the study of antiquity.

Hanisch concludes her survey by stating that the decline in research in some fields was attributable to a lack of interest, rather than a lack of competent scholars. Moreover, the discipline appears less homogeneous and structured than during the period of the Weimar Republic, despite attempts at centralization (2003: 140–41). Hanisch's findings contradict Johansen's thesis according to which in reaction to the hostile attitude of the regime towards Oriental studies, more modern research trends were abandoned for the sake of the traditional fields of the nineteenth century, which were considered to be purely scholarly (1990: 91–92). Since Johansen does not provide any evidence to support his thesis, Hanisch's analysis poses a successful challenge. This leaves the question, whether the field actually faced a systematic policy of the NS regime, as is suggested by Johansen and – in a different way – argued by Ellinger.

NS policy towards Oriental studies

Johansen draws in his assessment on what appears to be obvious: the racist aspects of NS ideology made it unlikely for Oriental studies, and especially Middle East studies, to become a concern of high preference. But the obvious might not necessarily be right. In the second part of his study (2006: 277–418), Ellinger aims at showing that it was possible to construct a coherent ideological system that allowed to include the Orient, even if Rosenberg's concept of the "Aryan race" as the origin of civilization serves as baseline.

Starting chronologically, the attempts to establish the non-Semitic origin of ancient civilizations in the Orient lay the basis for the ideological system at the heart of which stands Schaeder's version of Persian/Iranian history. According to Schaeder, the first "Aryan" empire was established in Persia, which was followed by others, such as the Greeks and the Romans, to find its ultimate realization in the *Third Reich*. The "Aryan" culture in Persia is thought to have influenced and shaped the cultures of the entire region (Middle East), imbuing them with basic, though diluted "Aryan" characteristics (2006: 315–22). As Haridi (1995) has shown, Schaeder draws on C.H. Becker's circles of civilizations. While Becker put Greek culture at the center and its "diluted" version, Hellenism, as the basis for a common cultural bond between Europe and the Middle East, while preserving European hegemony, Schaeder shifts the center to Aryan culture in Persia. Ellinger's investigation shows that Schaeder's framework could be developed into a comprehensive ideological system by means of the introduction of very "flexible" concepts of "race" and "nation." Thus it becomes possible to integrate the entire Orient (including the Middle East) as potential German allies, though mostly not as equal partners, while Jews and such "Aryans" as the "British, French and Americans" are categorized as enemies (2006: 417–18).

Although Ellinger's discussion in this part of his study is very thorough and interesting, his conclusions are neither particularly surprising nor conclusive. It does not come as a surprise that an ideological system has the capacity to integrate even contradictory elements (e.g. Marcuse 1964). In this respect, Ellinger's findings merely show that Johansen's obvious truism has to be rejected. Moreover, Ellinger assembles the "comprehensive ideological system" by drawing on a great range of authors. When they made "their contributions," these authors may not have been aware of the "system," which Ellinger identifies. They might have been part of another interpretive context available at the time. As Marcuse argues, it is even possible that an act of opposition is integrated, quite irrespective of the actor's intentions. In this sense, the findings are inconclusive. It is still unclear whether (and when) this comprehensive ideological system actually existed, and – if it did – what the degree of its influence was. Was it strong enough to provide the basis for a comprehensive NS policy with regard to Oriental studies?

It seems rather questionable whether there was a comprehensive NS policy with regard to the discipline, or any discipline for that matter. Hartmut Titze argues that there was no systematic policy regarding the universities. Since 1933 no serious attempt was undertaken to reform the system of higher education. Already by 1935/6, the failure of partial attempts became apparent. He ascribes the situation to three major factors. The first one is time. The NS regime existed for twelve years and three months, during five and a half of which war was waged. Another factor was the multitude of institutions and centers of power within the ruling establishment that all competed with and against each other over resources, competences and spheres of influence ("*Führungschaos im Führerstaat*"). A third factor was the cyclical changes which determined the academic job market, reinforced by racist policies of ideological streamlining and persecution (1989: 228–29).

As has been described in chapter 2, the universities were in an unprecedented state of overcrowding in 1932. Due to extremely high unemployment and unrestrained anti-intellectual propaganda, student numbers dropped rapidly, shrinking to half their former size by 1939. Though the *REM*, the ministry of education, which for the first time extended its competence over the entire German state, was established in March 1934 (Zymek 1989: 191–92), it had no real chance of planning and

implementing any systematic policy. Rapid developments deprived any policy of its foundation and even required countermeasures which contradicted central ideological tenets, such as the admission of women or the reemployment of scholars who had been dismissed as politically unreliable.

Against this background, the closure of the Oriental institutes at Kiel and Giessen as well as other chairs in the field that were left vacant (Appendix 3, Hanisch 2003: 134–36, Ellinger 2006: 156–64), may be due to the lack of students, rather than to any official policy assumed to have been hostile. A financial rather than an ideological motivation is visible in the appointment policy (Appendix 3), as a few examples may illustrate. After Paul Kahle had been dismissed at Bonn in 1938, the university was in no hurry to find a successor. In 1940, Rudi Paret was appointed, but at first without tenure. Given that he had already held the position of *extraordinarius* at Heidelberg, he could have been expected to receive a proper appointment to a chair when he moved to Bonn. In other words, the university tried to pay as little as possible for an expert scholar who was considered necessary, as is reflected in the appointment of Wilhelm Heffening as *locum tenens* when Paret left for military service. A similar situation arose at Munich. After Otto Pretzl fell in action in 1941, Bertold Spuler was chosen as successor to the chair. But Spuler was preoccupied with his military tasks. Thus Hans Wehr was hired as *locum tenens*.

At Breslau, Carl Brockelmann, *ordinarius* of Oriental studies retired in 1935, and Friedrich Giese, *ordinarius* of Turkish and Islamic studies in 1936. Otto Spies was appointed *ordinarius* for Semitic and Islamic studies in 1936, and Herbert Duda became *extraordinarius* for Turkish and Islamic studies. In addition, Brockelmann was rehired as *locum tenens* (1936–45). Employing a *locum tenens* was an inexpensive option that did not require any long-term commitment on the part of the institution. Scholars employed in such a position include, for example, Helmut Scheel at Greifswald 1938–39; and Hans Wehr at Greifswald 1939–43; Alfons Maria Schneider at Prague 1942–43; Johann Fück, who was hired as *locum tenens* at Halle in 1938, before he was appointed to the chair,[10] and Gustav Haloun at Bonn and Berlin in 1936.

Haloun's career path shows that this employment strategy existed already before 1933. He worked as *locum tenens* at Göttingen in 1930; at Bonn in 1931, and again at Göttingen, 1932–34. Vacancies due to financial constraints were also a feature of the universities during the Weimar Republic. For example, an institute for Islamic studies had been established at Leipzig, where Richard Hartmann was employed as *extraordinarius* (1918–22). The institute was closed in the course of the economic crisis in 1923. At Jena, no successor was appointed to the chair of Karl Vollers. Instead, the university hired two scholars as *extraordinarii*: Arthur Ungnad who specialized in Assyriology, and Heinrich Hilgenfeld focusing on Semitic languages. When Ungnad left for Greifswald in 1919, no other scholar was employed in his place, nor was Hilgenfeld promoted to *ordinarius*. In 1924, Hilgenfeld lost his position, because the university could no longer afford his salary. Only in 1935, Hans Ellenberg became lecturer of Arabic, Turkish and Persian. Two years later, also Hilgenfeld was rehired, but only to the position of lecturer.

During the Weimar Republic, universities had frequently to operate under severe financial constraints, while coping with unprecedented numbers of students during the later years. Since 1933, the financial situation remained difficult, but student numbers plunged. A teaching institution without students loses much of its legitimization. If there had been a process translating ideological convictions into concrete policy, it should not have been difficult under such circumstances to halt all appointments in disciplines deemed unnecessary or undesirable in ideological terms. As Appendix 3 shows, appointments were nonetheless made. While a concern for finances is clearly discernible, there seems to be no indication for a policy targeting Middle East studies. The political intervention aimed not *ad rem*, but *ad hominem*. Scholars were dismissed not because of their expertise, but of their descent, religion and political believes, while some others were promoted for their active support of the regime.

This can be seen as part of a wider pattern, extending also to schools that could be expected to have been considered a high priority in light the large number of pupils involved. Based on the "law for the restitution of the civil service" (7 April 1933), a process for the *Überprüfung aller Beamten in den Unterrichtsbehörden und Schulen* (inspection of all civil servants employed by the education authorities and at schools) was initiated, aiming at the dismissal of teachers of Jewish origin and the dismissal, demotion, or disciplinary transfer of all those who were considered politically unreliable. This was not a unified process; it left room for quite a range of local differences. Nonetheless, the result was that teachers were in general very close to the regime's ideology. At the same time, however, the formulation and implementation of a NS educational concept was not treated as a matter of urgency. The *REM* issued new teaching guidelines for elementary schools only in 1937, and for high schools in 1938. Most school textbooks that had been used during the Weimar Republic remained in use (Zymek 1989: 190–92).

Johansen's sole documentary evidence for the regime's hostile policy towards the discipline is Paul Ritterbusch's address at the Orientalist convention in 1942. It might therefore warrant closer consideration. The convention was held at Berlin in the framework of the so-called *Kriegseinsatz der Geisteswissenschaften*. Whereas the sciences could be seen to make a vital contribution to the war effort, other academic disciplines were criticized for their insufficient commitment to NS ideology, as was reflected in Rosenberg's *Hohe Schule*, established as alternative to the university, and for their uselessness in practical terms. Since 1940, Bernard Rust, minister of education, and the jurist Paul Ritterbusch (1900–945), rector at Kiel, who initiated the project ("*Aktion Ritterbusch*") and afterwards obtained a position at the ministry for his efforts, promoted a campaign to boost morale by individual disciplines staging a public show of strength, or one might say, of business/academia as usual, despite the numerous scholars who had been dismissed or called up for military service, and despite the war. The first scholars to stage such events were the jurists/lawyers, the historians, the Anglicists and the classicists (Hanisch 2003: 166–67).

Ritterbusch charged Walter Wüst (1901–41), *ordinarius* of Indo-Germanic studies and rector at Munich, who also held a leading position in the *Ahnenerbe* of

the SS, with organizing a convention for Oriental studies and archaeology, while Helmut Scheel, in his function as the secretary of the *DMG*, was responsible for the practical arrangements. Funding was provided by the *DFG* (German Research Association), the military high command and the Prussian academy of sciences. The Orientalists' convention was held in conjunction with another one on Indo-Germanic studies, also organized by Wüst.[11] Attendance at the convention was restricted, by invitation only. Contrary to previous *DMG*'s annual meetings, the organizers invited only established scholars. Those who were serving in the army at the time were granted a leave of absence in order to attend the convention (Hanisch 2003: 168–69; Ellinger 2006: 246–51).

Ritterbusch held the opening address. In Johansen's view, he was admonitory in form and intent, by calling upon Orientalists to prove by their work that the funds which they receive and which might otherwise go to Indo-Germanic studies [i.e. the scholars convened "next door"] are justified (1990: 91). Ritterbusch surely left no doubt about his priorities. For him, Indo-Germanic studies, as part of the German history, had priority over Oriental studies, i.e. the history of others. That is not surprising. But in light of his priorities, Ritterbusch was actually rather supportive in his speech, when he stressed great past achievements of Oriental studies, expressed his hope for future success (defined by relevance) and promised to extend his support (Ritterbusch 1944: 4–5). Also the general setting of the convention and the funding it received indicate that the official strategy was not one of admonishment, but rather one of "hugging" scholars into cooperation. The latter is supported by Hanisch's presentation of the speech (2003: 170), although she refrains from any explicit evaluation or any reference to Johansen's interpretation.

Ellinger considers the event to have been the apex of the interaction between the NS regime and the discipline, its scholars, organizations and institutions (2006: 251). But he also finds that the scholarly lectures presented on the occasion were not political on first sight.

> Many of the expediency-induced, racist, ideological and political details of the scholarly texts – even if they appear on first sight as purely philological – may only be uncovered if placed into the context of the ideologically oriented German policy in the Near East as well as of the war plans and the actual military developments.[12]
>
> (Ellinger 2006: 250–51)

It is rather surprising that the scholars should have refrained from making openly political contributions, to which they were otherwise committed, as Ellinger's rendering suggests. This discrepancy is even more puzzling in light of the fact that this was an event that was explicitly organized as a stage for such ideologically-committed, scholarly statements. Ellinger's supplement-argument that this was not the only occasion on which the "Orientalists could distinguish themselves as pro-NS scholars" (2006: 251), does not help to clarify the matter. Thus there may be doubt whether this was actually the height of collaboration; or if it was, whether the collaboration was as unrestrained as Ellinger argues.

In any case, the event including Ritterbusch's address can be seen as aiming at cooperation rather than confrontation. Thus Johansen has no evidence to support his assumption of a consistently hostile policy towards Oriental studies. At the same time, the friendly intentions of Ritterbusch and thus – by extension – of the *REM* (and other official institutions lending their support to the event) do not imply that any positive policy had been adopted systematically. In light of Titze's findings, the adoption of project-related ad-hoc strategies is more likely than any comprehensive policy. Hanisch seems to come to a similar conclusion. Following Kahle's report, contacts developed between him and Hinz at the *REM* that led to the plan of establishing a huge Orient institute at Berlin, which Kahle was supposed to head. The plan was not realized, in part due to doubts concerning Kahle's political commitment (2003: 147–48).[13] Hanisch sees in the abandonment of the plan for the institute an indication for the lack of any coherent concept concerning Oriental studies at the *REM* (2003: 148). In her view, the situation became even worse, when Hinz left the ministry for a chair at Göttingen in 1937. Afterwards, nobody at the ministry had any professional competence regarding Oriental studies (2003: 149).

Ellinger argues the opposite. In his view, the proposal submitted by Babinger and Hinz in 1933 was adopted as official policy and actually implemented (2006: 186). Although his study contains an impressive wealth of documentary evidence, there is none cited to support his thesis. The absence of any document relating to the adoption of the policy does not necessarily imply that such a policy did not exist, but it increases the burden of proof by means of circumstantial evidence. To support his thesis, Ellinger presents the following argument: The official NS policy with regard to Oriental studies (as part of the universities) comprised two stages. During the first stage (1933–38/9), the policy focused on the purge in order to ensure that only Aryan scholars were employed. In the second stage (1938/9–45), the policy focused on the restructuring of the discipline according to the proposal from 1933. The implementation is surmised on the basis of "its results." Thus it can be shown that many scholars had to leave their university positions in order to serve in various functions related with the war effort. As a result, academic pursuits were hampered or even halted at many universities, with the exception of Berlin and Vienna. Scholars employed at these two universities were generally not called up for military service, and could often make their "contributions to the war effort" at one of the central institutions (2006: 161–64). Thus, indeed, a concentration of Oriental studies at Berlin and Vienna can be observed, although the discipline persisted – under considerably less favorable conditions – also at other universities. The question is whether this can be seen as the implementation of the proposal, as Ellinger does, or as just the fall-out of the war conditions, which also included the political will to keep the capital going.

The second element of the proposal's implementation is the restructuring of the field of Oriental studies at Berlin. In this regard, Ellinger cites two developments. One is the transition from Semitic to Arabic studies which is seen to mark the transformation of the Oriental institute. The weakness of the evidence supporting the thesis has been discussed above. The second development is the establishment

of a faculty for the study of foreign countries (*Auslandswissenschaftliche Fakultät*) at the university in 1940. The scholars who had previously taught Oriental subjects at the SOS (which was not part of the university) were employed at the newly created faculty (see also Appendix 4). These scholars thus obtained university positions, though – apart from Gerhard von Mende (1904–63), an expert on the Soviet Union including Turkish studies – not as *ordinarii*. Following the tradition of the SOS and the expediency of the time, the new faculty focused on the contemporary conditions of foreign countries, including those in "East Asia, Southeast Asia, India, Southwest Asia and Africa." The category of Southwest Asia was subdivided into five sections: 1. Arabia and Arabic speaking areas; 2. Syria and Palestine; 3. Turkey; 4. the Caucasus; and 5. Persia and Afghanistan (Ellinger 2006: 172–75).

The establishment of the study of the contemporary Middle East within the framework of the new faculty was indeed an innovation. One may doubt, however, that it can be seen as transforming the discipline, even at Berlin, given that it was established alongside the existing Oriental institute at the faculty of philosophy. In the long run, this new option of a field of specialization at the university might have affected the established discipline. But the five years of its existence can hardly count as evidence for the transformation of discipline of Oriental studies. In this respect, it also falls short of a realization of the proposal. Babinger and Hinz called for contemporary studies to become a (major) part of Oriental studies. This did obviously not happen. Therefore Ellinger's thesis of the proposal's adoption as NS policy and its implementation seems untenable, just as Johansen's assumption of coherently hostile NS policy towards Oriental studies.

NS projects involving Oriental studies

The lack of evidence for any coherent NS policy towards Orientals studies supports Hanisch's view that project-related ad hoc strategies were adopted. This assumption can be supported by further circumstantial evidence. First of all, the institutional realization of "hard-core" NS ideology was pursued by establishing alternative institutions or by transforming limited parts of existing institutions. Several such examples can be cited.

Alfred Rosenberg (1893–1946) as "*Beauftragter des Führers für die gesamte geistige und weltanschauliche Schulung und Erziehung der NSDAP*" (Hitler's delegate in all matters of intellectual and ideological training and education of the NSDAP) headed his own special department (Bollmus 2006), which engaged in various educational projects including the establishment of a NS type of university (*Hohe Schule*, in contradistinction to *Hochschule*) in 1938. A central concern was the redefinition of antiquity based on so-called proper race considerations, as is also reflected in Ellinger's analysis of scholarly research, where he uses Rosenberg's views as the baseline for his discussion (e.g., 2006: 300, 310, 312, 314). A number of research projects on Semitic peoples were also undertaken, to demonstrate their difference to the Indo-Germanic ones (Hanisch 2003: 151).

In 1941, an institute for "research on the Jewish question" was established, which was supposed to document the destructive influence that Jews had on other nations especially during the last two centuries. It competed with other institutions pursuing a similar line of investigation, such as the *Reichsinstitut für die Geschichte des neuen Deutschlands* (institute for the history of the new Germany) and the *Reichsinstitut zur Judenfrage* (institute for Jewish issues). The latter was originally the chair of New Testament at Tübingen held by Gerhard Kittel (1888–1948) since 1926, until its transformation in 1936. Rosenberg's department established another institute for the study of religion at Halle, in order to replace the Jewish Biblical tradition with an Aryan alternative. Also in this field, it was not the only contender. In 1939, Hans Heinrich Schaeder and Richard Hartmann requested the establishment of a chair for Jewish issues (Rabbinical-Talmudic Judaism) at Berlin, to which they suggested appointing Karl Georg Kuhn (1906–76). The university declined. In 1942, Kuhn became *extraordinarius* for New Testament and Jewish issues at the faculty of theology at Tübingen (Hanisch 2003: 141).

Since February 1943, the activities undertaken by Rosenberg's department became more limited, due in part to the developments of the war, but also due to a personnel change in the *REM* which favored Heinrich Himmler (1900–1945) instead of Rosenberg (Hanisch 2003: 151–52). Rosenberg himself might have been pre-occupied with what he considered more urgent matters. Since 1941, he also headed the newly established ministry for the occupied "Eastern territories," i.e., of the Baltic states and the Soviet Union (Ellinger 2006: 257–64).

Another NS research institution, the *Ahnenerbe* (literally, ancestral heritage), a foundation of the SS, was established in 1935 with the intention to study the *Raum, Geist und Tat des nordischen Indogermanentums* (the territory, thoughts and deeds of the Nordic Indo-Germanic race) (Kater 2006). In light of what was perceived as the inadequacy of academic research in the humanities, the foundation expanded its program in 1938/9, to include also special research units on the Near East and on North Africa. The latter was headed by Otto Rössler (1907–91) and the former by Victor Christian. The *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, which Christian edited since 1938, was published by the foundation's publishing house (Hanisch 2003: 150). Although Ellinger categorizes the *Ahnenerbe* as a non-state, "private organization" (*private Organisation*), it could—as an SS project—exert more influence than for example the *DMG*, which is treated under the same category. Part of that influence was the empowerment of its scholars at the universities where they were employed. Thus Walther Wüst's position at Munich was boosted by the leading role he played as scholar of Indo-Germanic studies at the *Ahnenerbe*, while Wüst's presence made Munich one of the university centers outside Berlin. To an even higher degree, this also holds true for Christian at Vienna, which explains why Vienna had similarly favorable conditions for scholars in Oriental studies as Berlin. Rössler, who was unemployed, was actually placed by the *Ahnenerbe* as lecturer at the Oriental Institute at Tübingen, which Littmann headed (Ellinger 2006: 108–13).

Tübingen was the seat of another SS project, the *Forschungsstelle Orient* (research center Orient), established in 1943. Rössler was part of the project, which

was meant to become a major research center. As far as is known, these plans have not been realized (Ellinger 2006: 268–72; Hanisch 2003: 150, 164–65). A third SS project was slightly more successful: the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft Turkestan* (Turkistan team), which was to be established within the framework of *DMG*. The preparations began in 1942, but the realization took until the end of 1944. According to the plan, German scholars were supposed to work together with native, Turkish-speaking "specialists" in order to study the conditions in the Central Asian parts of the Soviet Union. The "specialists" were mostly POWs, who could be recruited with the help of Bertold Spuler (1911–90). Richard Hartmann, Herbert Jansky (1898–1981), and Annemaire von Gabain (1901–93) were among the German scholars in the project. It is unclear whether or not some actual work was undertaken in this framework (Brentjes 1985; Ellinger 2006: 266–68).

It seems, however, that the Turkistan team participated in another SS project, the *Mullah-Schule* (mullah school), in Dresden. In light of the military developments at the front in the East, especially after the defeat at Stalingrad, both the army and the SS were in constantly growing need to employ auxiliary forces recruited from among POWs and deserts from the Soviet army. In order to transform these recruits into (effective) military units, leadership with special expertise was required. Such expertise was meant to be taught at the mullah school. The school was set up in a building for which experts from the museum in Berlin adjusted the interior design to "Muslim taste." Only a small part of the original plan to establish a large-scale project was implemented. Imam 'Alim Idris (b. 1887), who had served as imam at the POW camp Wünsdorf during the First World War and later at the mosque at Wünsdorf (1922–24) (Abdullah 1981), was employed as teacher. Jansky joined as expert on folklore, and Johannes Benzing (1913–2001) as language specialist. Due to health reasons, R. Hartmann functioned only as a consultant on Islamic issues. The school actually taught one course from September 1944 until February 1945, when the building was destroyed by an air raid. In addition, the Turkistan team published newspapers for Muslim troops. Benzing served as language editor (Hanisch 2003: 163–64).

The German army (*Wehrmacht*) undertook a similar project, the so-called mullah courses, in order to train the leadership for military units composed of deserters from the Soviet army and recruits from among POWs, which were employed since 1942. Though the main focus of the propaganda strategy addressed the ethnic (Turanian) identity of the recruits, the Muslim component also received attention, since many were Muslims. At Göttingen, Spuler, advisor of the high command of the German army on Turkish issues and army representative in charge of Mullah training courses, organized six such courses for Muslim religious leaders, who were to serve in army units (Hanisch 2003: 162; Ellinger 2006:254–56).

Apart from Spuler, the army also made use of other scholars of Oriental studies, either in regular army units or in espionage. According to Ellinger's survey, about half of the Orientalists serving in the army were charged with tasks based on their expertise. In most cases, this meant that they worked as interpreters. Ellinger lists Erwin Gräf, Rudi Paret, Otto Pretzl, and—as a borderline case—Hanna Sohrweide (attached to the German navy attaché in Istanbul) in this category (2006: 251–52).

Hanisch mentions also Walther Björkman, Walther Braune, Erich Bräunlich, Arthur Schaade, and Otto Spies in this context (2003: 159 n. 569). Gerhard von Mende moved from the army to Rosenberg's ministry for the occupied Eastern territories in 1941, where he headed the Caucasus and Turkistan desk. Also Gotthard Jäschke collaborated with that ministry (Kreiser 1998b). Adam Falkenstein and Oluf Krückmann were sent on a mission to Iraq in 1941; and Walther Hinz worked as a spy in Turkey (Ellinger 2006: 252–54). In addition, Bräunlich seems to have served in military espionage missions (Hanisch 2003: 181).

The Prussian academy of sciences established a special research committee on North Africa in 1941. Its actual work lasted until 1943, and its main project was the funding of a research trip to North Africa, undertaken by Ernst Rackow, in order "to study Bedouin dresses" (Hanisch 2003: 157). Rackow went on a research trip to North Africa on behalf of the academy and the museum at Berlin in 1939. During the Second World War, he was employed as interpreter for the military (Singer 1961). It is not clear from the documentation whether he actually went on a second research trip to North Africa on behalf of the academy (and probably the army) or whether it was a matter of "recycling" in pursuit of funds.

The foreign ministry provided another framework for a project-oriented cooperation with scholars. Thus Hans Wehr received funding for his dictionary project from the foreign ministry until 1938, when the support was withdrawn "for lack of financial resources" (Hanisch 2003: 160 n. 572; Ellinger 2006: 193). Between 1940 and 1944, the foreign ministry in collaboration with the *REM* established 16 German research institutes in European countries, which where neutral, German allies, or occupied by German forces, but not yet place under a "civil administration." In that framework, Karl Garbers headed the institute in Sarajevo, and Herbert Duda found employment at the institute in Sofia (Ellinger 2006: 238–42). Franz Babinger, who had lost his position at the University of Berlin due to doubts (raised by Schaeder) concerning his Aryan lineage, rendered services at the institute in Bucharest. Similar colonial interests, in this case with regard to Africa, were pursued within the framework of a colonial research committee which was established in 1937 by the *REM* in collaboration with the German Research Foundation. Diedrich Westermann, Edgar Pröbster, and Richard Hartmann contributed to the project, that lost its importance after the German troops in North Africa were defeated and the attention was re-focused entirely on the Soviet Union (Ellinger 2006: 243–45).

The developments which lead to the establishment of the faculty for the study of foreign countries at Berlin in 1940 can be placed in the context of the NS projects cited. From its beginning in 1887, the *SOS* in Berlin was conceived as a training institute for civil servants and other personnel required for German foreign policy. Although the lecturers at the *SOS* always aspired to have the institution upgraded to university status, they did not succeed. After the First World War, and especially the loss of German colonies, the foreign-policy requirements decreased substantially, and so did the funding for the *SOS*. Since 1933, the situation changed considerably (Hanisch 2003: 157–58; Ellinger 2006: 168–72). The lecturers at the *SOS* were able to rally official government interest and support, which reflected the change

in German foreign policy, but was probably also the result of the political activism of some of the lecturers.

In particular, Anton Palme (b. 1872) seems to have played a rather active role. He had been lecturer for Russian at the *SOS* since the turn of the century. Already eleven days after the "law for the restitution of the civil service" was issued (April 7, 1933), Palme wrote to the ministry of education requesting that the current director, Eugen Mittwoch, be dismissed without any delay (Hanisch 2003: 119). Despite the intensive lobbying undertaken by Palme in cooperation with Georg Kampffmeyer (1894–1936), the transformation of the *SOS* into an *Auslandshochschule* (college for the study of foreign countries), granting it the same status as a polytechnic, was achieved only in 1936. Palme became its acting director. He explicitly presented the college's task as essential part of National Socialism. Palme was charged with the task to restructure the college in preparation for its integration into the university. (Hanisch 2003: 157–58; Ellinger 2006: 169–70).

But the plans changed in 1938, due to an intervention by the *Sicherheitsdienst* (security and intelligence service of the SS) on behalf of Himmler (Ellinger 2006: 172). As a result, a faculty for the study of foreign countries was established at the university in 1940. As staff members it took over the personnel of the *SOS* and the teachers from the *Deutsche Hochschule für Politik* (German college for policy studies). The latter had been founded as a private college in 1920. In 1927, part of its teachers formed a group that sympathized with NS ideas, which led to a confrontation with the other teacher. The conflict was "resolve," when most of the latter emigrated after Hitler came to power. In 1937, the college became a state institution (Eisfeld 1991). The dean of the faculty was Franz A. Six (1909–75), a scholar of journalism and a member of Himmler's *Sicherheitsdienst*, with the rank of commander of a unit (*Standartenführer*) (Hanisch 2003: 158; Ellinger 2006: 173).

Six also coordinated the German colleges that were established abroad during the war with the intention to study local conditions in preparation of German administration. Moreover, he headed another institution, the *Deutsche Auslandswissenschaftliche Institut* (German Institute for the study of foreign countries), also established in 1940, on the initiative of the *Sicherheitsdienst*. The institute was not part of the university; formally it fell directly under the supervision of the *REM*. The internal structure followed that of the faculty; and the teachers at the faculty worked also at the institute. In addition, the institute engaged members of various government and NSDAP branches. It seems that most of these had close connections with Himmler. On specific issues the institute requested (and received) the assistance of scholars in Oriental studies (e.g., R. Hartmann, Klingmüller, Rössler, Schaeder, Spies). The main difference between the faculty and the institute was that the latter geared its activities towards practical use, while the former aspired to be also an academic institution (Ellinger 2006: 234–38).

Given the actors involved in the establishment of the faculty, it seems rather unlikely that this was part of a policy plan, drafted in 1933, and implemented by the *REM*, as Ellinger argues. The new faculty remained a "singular" institution, which existed in its specific form until 1945. No other universities followed the example set at Berlin. If the innovation had an influence on the academic discipline, it is most likely to have occurred by way of some of the scholars it employed. Between 1933 and 1945, the following scholars of Middle East studies were members of its teaching staff: Sebastian Beck, Walther Björkman, Walther Braune, Gotthard Jäschke, Ludwig Peters, Helmuth Scheel, and Hans Wehr (in 1945) (Appendix 4). After the Second World War, Björkman, who had taken up teaching at Breslau in 1944, was lecturer at Uppsala in Sweden (1951–63) and visiting professor at Ankara (1953–59); Braune was appointed to a chair at the *Freie Universität* in West Berlin in 1948 and played a leading role in Islamic studies there; Jäschke taught as visiting professor at Münster (1947–59); Peters was appointed to a chair at Berlin (East) in 1947 and moved to a college for the training of civil servants in 1950; Scheel held a chair at Mainz and played a leading role in the academy of sciences in the Federal Republic; Wehr resumed teaching at Erlangen in 1945, where he was appointed to a chair in 1956; later he move to Münster (1957–74). Beck does not seem to have been re-employed; he died in 1951. Thus, it is possible that post-war developments of the field were influenced by the experience at the faculty for the study of foreign countries. Whether or not, such an influence actually existed requires an investigation that goes beyond the scope of this study.

Scholars of Oriental studies during the NS regime

In light of these findings, Hanisch's assumption that there was no comprehensive NS policy with regard to the discipline of Oriental studies seems reasonable. Ellinger's investigation of the literature has shown that NS ideology could potentially incorporate Oriental studies, including Middle East studies. Whether or not it actually did, is still an open question. As the various projects cited illustrate, NS institutions were ready to draw on the cooperation with scholars of Oriental studies, especially during the war, when it was deemed necessary. It is an open question whether this meant that these NS institutions had adjusted their ideological framework, or whether they just did not let ideology stand in their way to achieving their goals.

Moreover, ideology may not have been as overarching as Ellinger and Johansen seem to assume. August Fischer, scholar of Semitic languages at Leipzig, who is often portrayed as the representative of the traditional philological approach, was an enthusiastic and committed Nazi and an early NSDAP member. At that point, NS ideology was certainly not yet adjusted to accommodate the inclusion of the Middle East in an "Aryan" world. There is no indication that Fischer considered that to be a problem, nor that his profession caused problems in NS circles. At later points in time, membership in the NSDAP or other NS organizations might have been less a matter of ideology. Though also found before 1933, the influence of political connections on employment and promotion decisions became more widespread during the NS period, when it also became possible to enter a university career via employment at the ministry of education (e.g., Scheel and Hinz).

Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that scholars who were not excluded and remained in Nazi Germany had a wide range of potential forms of cooperation

with the NS regime. The option of non-cooperation did not exist, but the degree of involvement could differ greatly, which was not only dependent on the choices a person made, but also to a considerable part on the circumstances and on chance. Whether or not a scholar appears as a signatory on one of the pledges of allegiance to Hitler, for example, may be the result of being in the right or wrong place at the time. Refusing to sign, when asked, would have been a courageous act. By the same token, Turkish studies had the misfortune of being in great demand within the framework of the plans to conquer the Soviet Union. This opened opportunities for scholars who aspired to great careers, and ended with the field being closely associated with NS imperialism. Scholars specializing in other fields within Oriental studies might have followed the same path, if they had been given the chance.

In order to reach a more conclusive picture of the actual involvement of the scholars of Oriental studies with the NS regime, it would be necessary to investigate these scholars individually, as Kreiser did with regard to Jäschke (1998b). On the basis of what is known, it seems that the cooperation may have been quite extensive, even among the more unlikely candidates. Paul Kahle may serve as an illustration. He was *ordinarius* for Semitic languages at Bonn, where he also headed the institute of Oriental studies. Henry Wassermann credits him with having been the only serious scholar in the field of Jewish studies during the Weimar Republic (2003: 203–34). Considering his field of specialization, Kahle could probably be expected to have perceived an irreconcilable antagonism to NS ideology, more than other scholars in the field. But his account of the events suggests otherwise:

> The way in which the first Nazi civil servants treated everything connected with Oriental studies in Germany, worried me a bit. They were anti-Semites and considered all those who came from the Orient to be Jewish. They were often very surprised, when they were informed that there were many non-Jewish Orientals, and moreover that there was a difference between Orientals and Orientalists.[14]
>
> (Kahle 1998: 148)

Kahle's comments were written in England in 1942, after he and his family had left Germany. His wife and one of his five sons were caught helping a Jewish shopkeeper clean up the destruction caused during the *Kristallnacht* ("the night of broken glass") in November 1938. The son was expelled from university, and an intimidation campaign was launched against the family. When unwilling publicly to distance himself from his wife and son, Kahle was dismissed from his position at the university and as secretary of the *DMG*. Due to continuing harassment, the family decided to leave Germany and managed to escape to England in 1939.[15] In 1942, Kahle wrote a report on the University of Bonn for the British authorities, which was meant to assist the Allied forces after the war. The passage cited is part of the report.

His comments illustrate that the Orientalist Paul Kahle did not identify with the victims of the NS racist campaign. Illusionary as it might have been, he operated on the assumption that the racism of NS ideology was intended to target Jews only. Any hostility towards the discipline of Middle East studies and/or the scholars in the field was interpreted as a misunderstanding stemming from ignorance. To correct the matter, Kahle went to see Heinrich Vahlen (1869–1945), the head of the academic desk (*Amt für Wissenschaft*) at the *REM* (1934–37). Vahlen was not just a civil servant. He had been a member of the NSDAP for a long time, had lost the chair for mathematics at Greifswald due to his anti-republican activities and had spent several years in exile in Austria. After Hitler came to power in January 1933, Vahlen returned to Germany and received the appointment at the *REM* in compensation for his suffering for "the Cause." At the meeting Kahle "had a long conversation" with Vahlen, who then "understood that this was a problem" (Kahle 1998: 148). The practical consequences of the encounter were Kahle's report on the situation of Oriental studies in Germany, which Vahlen had requested, and the discussions concerning the plan to establish the institute at Berlin.

Kahle was not a Nazi, and probably not even an anti-Semite. Thus there is little reason to assume that there was common ground in ideological terms between him and the regime. As a scholar he specialized in Middle Eastern societies and cultures that were certainly not "Aryan." Thus Kahle should have been among the first ones to realize the likelihood of a conflict between the discipline and the NS regime. But Kahle believed that fruitful cooperation was possible, though not without limitations. The latter were not seen as intrinsic to the discipline, but to the individual scholars in question. During the negotiations concerning the Oriental institute at Berlin, Kahle did not doubt the viability of the project of the new Oriental institute at Berlin. He suggested to Vahlen, however, that he, Kahle, would not be a suitable director, since he "was not a Nazi" (1998: 149) Vahlen replied that this did not matter. Later it turned out that Vahlen was ill informed.

Kahle's perception of the situation may have been shared by other scholars. Apart from scholars specializing in "Aryan" Orientals and those that were part of the immediate conquest scheme, scholars in Oriental studies as such had no particular incentive to be attracted to NS ideology. At the same time, however, there is no evidence for the assumption that most of them kept their distance from the regime, as Johansen suggests (1990: 91–92), or that they lived "as spiritual outsiders," as Paret claims (1968: 45). On the basis of the available evidence, it is not impossible, however, that some of the scholars kept their distance and/or managed to remain outsiders. But that has to be established for each individual case. It is also not impossible that the lack of actual conflict between the discipline (or some of its parts) and the regime may have been also due to the absence of any systematic NS policy towards university education and research in general and the discipline in particular. Had the regime lasted longer, this might have changed eventually. But most fortunately, we shall never know.