



# Race and the Third Reich: Linguistics, Racial Anthropology and Genetics in the Dialectic of Volk

*Christopher M. Hutton*

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## **Race and the Third Reich: Linguistics, Racial Anthropology and Genetics in the Dialectic of Volk**

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Race and the Third Reich aims to set out the key concepts, debates and controversies that marked the academic study of race in Nazi Germany. It looks in particular at the discipline of racial anthropology and its relationship to linguistics and human biology.

Christopher Hutton identifies the central figures involved in the study of race during the Nazi regime, and traces continuities and discontinuities between Nazism and the study of human diversity in the Western tradition. Whilst Nazi race theory is commonly associated with the idea of a superior "Aryan race" and with the idealization of the Nordic ideal of blond hair, blue eyes and a "long-skull", Nazi race theorists, in common with their colleagues outside Germany, without exception denied the existence of an Aryan race. After 1935 official publications were at pains to stress that the term "Aryan" belonged to linguistics and was not a racial category at all. Under the influence of Mendelian genetics, racial anthropologists concluded that there was no necessary link between ideal physical appearance and ideal racial character. In the course of the Third Reich, racial anthropology was marginalized in favour of the rising science of human genetics. However, racial anthropologists played a key role in the crimes of the Nazi state by defining Jews and others as racial outsiders to be excluded at all costs from the body of the German Volk.

Anyone studying the Third Reich or who is interested in race theory will find this a fascinating, informative and accessible study.



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