Social Unrest in Impressionable Years and the Formation of Political Attitudes

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Motivation

- Political interest and participation is widely believed to be essential for proper democratic governance (Verba et al., 1995).
- Participation in politics helps build social capital, improves public health, empowers citizens, and has a positive impact on incomes at an aggregate level (Acemoglu et al., 2014; Barro, 1996; Guiso et al., 2004; Putnam, 2000).
- Even more important in the face of the declining participation rates in many established democracies, and the simultaneously increasing democratization in many parts of Africa and Latin America (Putnam, 2000; Resnick and Casale, 2011; Schraufnagel and Sgouraki, 2005).

Motivation

- An important open question: The role of socioeconomic circumstances, socialization, and childhood events, on adult political behaviour, and especially effects on an individual's interest and participation in political activity.
- Are there long-term stable determinants of political behaviour?
- Is political behaviour determined largely by a citizen's context-specific cost-benefit analyses?

This Paper

- We answer these questions using a retrospective study of the expulsion of Jewish professionals in Nazi Germany.
- Investigate the long-term impacts of living through social unrest in childhood and early adulthood on the political behaviour of German adults.
- Test the impressionable years hypothesis.
- We shed light on the potential channels using Political ”Resources” theory.

- Determinants of Political Participation: Socioeconomic Status
  - Bekkers, 2005; Brady et al., 1995; Finkel and Muller, 1998, Putnam, 1995.
  - The link between events in childhood that alter individuals' socioeconomic status and adult political behaviour.

- Shocks during Formative Periods and Long-run Economic and Political Beliefs and Attitudes
  - Giuliano and Spilimbergo, 2014; Adhvaryu and Fenske, 2014; Kim and Lee, 2014; Malmendier and Nagel, 2011; Yanagizawa-Drott and Madestam, 2012.
  - Our paper provides further evidence on the importance of early life events, especially catastrophic events, for adult attitudes and behaviour, as predicted by the *impressionable years* and *increasing persistence* hypotheses.

- Economic and Political Legacies of the Holocaust
  - Pascali, 2016; Akbulut-Yuksel and Yuksel, 2015; Grosfeld, Rodnyansky and Zhuravskaya, 2013; Acemoglu, Hassan and Robinson, 2011.
  - Our study examines a different country, and we emphasize the channel through which an exposure to persecutions is related to political behaviour at an individual level, as opposed to aggregate changes in the social structure.
  - Control for the potential confounders.
  - Social structure is important for political behaviour by changing individuals' abilities to acquire civic skills.

Jewish Population in Germany

- In 1933, there were 525,000 Jews in Germany, about 0.8 percent of the country's population (Friedlander, 1998; Evans, 2005).
- The Jewish population had been remarkably successful in professional occupations, such as medicine, teaching, law, journalism, finance, business, and academia.
- Were highly represented in the middle and upper-middle classes.

Jewish Professionals

- The German Nazi party gained power in 1933.
- The exclusion of Jews from the civil service through the ”Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service” of April 7, 1933.
- The Nazi government purged Jews from civil service, a vast organization in Germany that included teachers, professors, judges and many other professionals (Friedland, 2009; Kaplan, 2005).
- 8.3% of teachers were dismissed (German Municipalities Statistical Yearbooks, 1933; 1935).
- Famously, 15 percent of university professors of all categories were dismissed and were forced to emigration (Strauss, 1983).

Jewish Professionals

- Further legislation in 1933 sharply curtailed ”Jewish activity” in the medical and legal professions.
- Within the same year, 16 percent of the lawyers lost their jobs because of the anti-Semitic persecutions (Jarausch, 1986).
- In July 1933, Jewish doctors lost their patients with substitute health insurance schemes, and private insurance companies reimbursed the fees of Jewish doctors only for their Jewish patients.
- In 1938, all Jewish doctors lost their medical licenses, and Jewish lawyers lost their admission to the bar.
- Germany found it difficult to fill the vacancies which opened up in affected occupations, and the purge reflected genuine changes in the social structure and education institutions between 1933 and 1945 (Waldinger, 2010).

Identification Strategy

- We estimate the effect of expulsion of Jewish population on children outcomes exploiting region-by-cohort variation in the fraction of Jewish population:

$$Y_{irt} = \alpha + \beta(FractionJewish_r \times ImpressionableCohort_{it}) + \rho_r + \tau_t + \delta' \mathbf{X_{irt}} + \epsilon_{irt}, \quad (1)$$

- Y_{irt} is a measure of political behaviour (interest and participation) for individual i in region r born in year t.
- $ImpressionableCohort_{it}$ equals to 1 if an individual is year of birth t was between 1910 and 1927, and 0 otherwise.
- ρ_r and τ_t are region and birth year fixed effects.
- $\mathbf{X_{irt}}$ controls for gender and rural dummies, and parental education.
- ϵ_{irt} is the error term clustered at the region level.

Impressionable Years

- We focus on children and young adults in our analysis.
- This is motivated by the well-established *impressionable years* and *increasing persistence* hypotheses in social psychology (Brim and Kagan, 1980; Krosnick and Alwin, 1989).
- These theories imply that beliefs are largely formed before full adulthood and fade more slowly with age, suggesting that the early years are crucial for belief formation.

Potential Confounding Factors

- Parallel Trend Assumption
- Different Categorization of the Affected and Control Groups
- Differential Mortality and Cohort Sizes
- Internal Migration
- WWII Destruction
- Nazi Party Support
- Communist Party Support
- Turnout Rate in 1932 Elections
- Catholic Share
- Regional Macroeconomic Conditions
- Differential Regional Characteristics
- State-cohort Trends

Historical Data

- We rely on a unique data set on fraction of Jewish population.
- The fraction of Jewish population in 1933 from the German Population and Occupation Census (Kessner, 1935).
- The fraction of Jewish population in 1946 (Einer, 1949).
- Population density, income per capita, WWII destruction, votes received by the Nazi and the Communist party, turnout rate, unemployment rate, Catholic share.

	All (1)	RORs with above avg. Jewish pop. (2)	RORs with below avg. Jewish pop. (3)	Difference s.e (difference) (4)
Percentage of Jews in 1933	1.190 (0.875)	1.955 (0.960)	0.715 (0.280)	1.240*** (0.027)
Percentage of Jews in 1946	0.156 (0.283)	0.291 (0.381)	0.073 (0.148)	0.219*** (0.011)
Area in km^2 in 1933	264.329 (211.083)	317.347 (251.813)	231.523 (173.516)	85.824*** (8.696)
Population in 1933	409,803 (409,803.000)	519,369 (342,292.900)	342,008 (349,870.300)	177,361*** (14,579.030)
Income per Capita in 1932 (in RM)	474.900 (103.711)	504.368 (70.599)	456.303 (116.233)	48.064*** (4.262)
Rubble per Capita	15.627 (7.480)	17.122 (9.019)	14.683 (6.137)	2.439 (0.306)

Individual-Level Data

- Individual and household characteristics from the 1985 German Socioeconomic Panel (GSOEP).
- The empirical analysis focuses only on West German sample and individuals born between 1910 and 1960.
- We recoded the raw data on the Jewish population using the German regional boundaries (ROR) in 1985 and then merged it by ROR with the individual-level data from the GSOEP.

	All (1)	RORs with above avg. Jewish pop. (2)	RORs with below avg. Jewish pop. (3)	Difference s.e (difference) (4)
Interest in Politics	0.361 (0.480)	0.363 (0.481)	0.3600 (0.480)	.003 (0.020)
Political Participation	0.082 (0.275)	0.084 (0.277)	0.081 (0.273)	0.003 (0.012)
Years of Schooling	11.320 (2.311)	11.435 (2.391)	11.248 (2.258)	0.187 (0.105)
Employment	0.616 (0.487)	0.642 (0.480)	0.599 (0.490)	0.043 (0.023)
Ln(wage)	8.944 (0.969)	8.974 (0.912)	8.924 (1.005)	0.050 (0.062)
Importance of Political Activity	0.233 (0.423)	0.201 (0.401)	0.252 (0.434)	-0.051 (0.021)
Volunteer	0.206 (0.404)	0.205 (0.404)	0.206 (0.405)	-0.001 (0.017)
Trust	0.622 (0.485)	0.653 (0.477)	0.605 (0.489)	0.048 (0.035)
Church Attendance	0.270 (0.444)	0.290 (0.454)	0.258 (0.438)	0.031 (0.022)
Mother with Basic Education	0.887 (0.316)	0.876 (0.330)	0.894 (0.308)	-0.018 (0.014)
Father with Basic Education	0.828 (0.377)	0.816 (0.387)	0.836 (0.371)	-0.019 (0.017)
Observations Max.	2,399	917	1,482	2,399

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	General Interest in Politics (Mean = 0.361)			
% of Jews in 1933 × Born btw. 1910–1927	−0.0392**	−0.0462**	−0.0451**	−0.0443**
	(0.0174)	(0.0173)	(0.0197)	(0.0193)
Mother Basic Educated		0.2329***		0.1464***
		(0.0398)		(0.0534)
Father Basic Educated			0.2132***	0.1433***
			(0.0319)	(0.0444)
R^2	0.113	0.144	0.1470	.152
Observations	2,389	2,064	2,040	2,009
	Participation in Local Politics (Mean = 0.082)			
% of Jews in 1933 × Born btw. 1910–1927	−0.0184**	−0.0187**	−0.0180*	−0.0179*
	(0.0074)	(0.0087)	(0.0100)	(0.0096)
Mother has more than Basic Education		0.0746***		0.051
		(0.0248)		(0.0364)
Father has more than Basic Education			0.0738***	0.050
			(0.0251)	(0.0347)
R^2	0.055	0.074	0.0720	.077
Observations	2,357	2,041	2,017	1,987

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	General Interest in Politics (Mean = 0.361)			
% of Jews in 1933 × Exposure Length	−0.0026**	−0.0036**	−0.0033**	−0.0033**
	(0.0013)	(0.0014)	(0.0015)	(0.0015)
Mother has more than Basic Education		0.2362***		0.1663***
		(0.0326)		(0.0445)
Father has more than Basic Education			0.1995***	0.1236***
			(0.0272)	(0.0376)
R^2	0.110	0.141	0.144	0.150
Observations	3,515	3,048	3,022	2,974
	Participation in Local Politics (Mean = 0.082)			
% of Jews in 1933 × Exposure Length	−0.0011*	−0.0020***	−0.0018**	−0.0019**
	(0.0006)	(0.0007)	(0.0008)	(0.0008)
Mother has more than Basic Education		0.0756***		0.053
		(0.0260)		(0.0350)
Father has more than Basic Education			0.0752***	0.0490*
			(0.0210)	(0.0279)
R^2	0.044	0.059	0.060	0.063
Observations	3,466	3,014	2,988	2,941

Parallel Trend

- The identifying assumption is that there would have been similar trends in political behaviour for cohorts across regions with different proportions of Jews in the population, if it had not been for the expulsions.
- Our identification assumption is valid if there are no differential cohort-region trends in political behaviour independent of exposure to the expulsions.
- We test this by comparing political behaviours across regions with different proportions of the population being Jewish in 1933, but using the younger cohort born between 1951 and 1960 as a placebo treatment group, and other (older and younger) cohorts as the control group.

Table: Falsification Tests

	Interest (1)	**Participation** (2)	**Interest** (3)	**Participation** (4)
% of Jews in 1933 × Born btw. 1951–1960	0.0165	0.0052	0.0264	−0.0019
	(0.0226)	(0.0120)	(0.0283)	(0.0134)
Placebo Control Group	Born in 1961–1970		Born in 1900–1909	
R^2	0.103	0.039	0.118	0.059
Observations	2,250	2,229	1,481	1,466

Different Categorization of the Affected Cohorts

- "impressionable age"?

- We address these concerns by utilizing a range of definitions of the treatment group, and also by estimating the impacts of the expulsions treating individuals born in 1910–1923, 1910–1933, 1910–1938, 1910-1945, 1915-1927 and 1908-1927 as alternative treatment groups.

	Born btw. 1910–1927 (1)	Born btw. 1910–1923 (2)	Born btw. 1910–1933 (3)	Born btw. 1910–1938 (4)
	General Interest in Politics (Mean = 0.361)			
% of Jews in 1933 × Cohort Dummy	-0.0392**	-0.0489***	-0.0366**	-0.0290*
	(0.0174)	(0.0176)	(0.0155)	(0.0166)
Female	-0.2705***	-0.2641***	-0.2634***	-0.2762***
	(0.0127)	(0.0137)	(0.0125)	(0.0107)
Rural	-0.0686***	-0.0683***	-0.0710***	-0.0695***
	(0.0197)	(0.0221)	(0.0208)	(0.0191)
R^2	0.1131	0.111	0.106	0.111
Observations	2,389	2,019	2,952	3,515
	Participation in Local Politics (Mean = 0.082)			
% of Jews in 1933 × Cohort Dummy	-0.0184**	-0.0122*	-0.0151**	-0.0099
	(0.0074)	(0.0071)	(0.0067)	(0.0073)
Female	-0.0563***	-0.0469***	-0.0597***	-0.0606***
	(0.0105)	(0.0109)	(0.0104)	(0.0093)
Rural	0.0148	0.019	0.0111	0.0104
	(0.0140)	(0.0172)	(0.0128)	(0.0124)
R^2	0.055	0.053	0.047	0.044
Observations	2,357	1,992	2,906	3,466

Internal Migration

- The dismissal of Jewish professionals may have increased the available jobs and attract economic migrants and Nazi supporters seeking to fill these positions.
- We do not expect differential migration rates, given the well-documented low rates of mobility in Germany, which are known to be even lower in early childhood (Hochstadt, 1999; Rainer and Siedler, 2009; Pischke and von Wachter, 2008).
- No effect of Jewish population on likelihood of moving in our sample.
- Also: Results are similar when we restrict our analysis to non-movers.

Differential Mortality and Differential Cohort Sizes

- For this analysis, we take advantage of the panel structure of SOEP, which enables us to analyze the mortality of the respondents between 1985 and 2011.
- The mortality variable refers to a dummy variable that takes a value of 1 if an individual has a recorded death year sometime between 1985 (the beginning of our sample) and 2011, and zero otherwise.
- We evaluate the importance of composition bias further by estimating the differences in sampling rates across regions and cohorts.
- We follow Qian et al. (2015) and use the sample size of the cohort in each region as the dependent variable, then test whether the cohort sizes differ systematically across regions and cohorts.

Robustness to Sample Selection

	Non-Movers Only				
	Interest in Politics (1)	**Participation in Politics** (2)	**Internal Migration** (3)	**Mortality** (4)	**Cohort Size** (5)
% of Jews in 1933	−0.0404*	−0.0209*	−0.0262	−0.0078	−0.1435
× Born btw. 1910–1927	(0.0269)	(0.0110)	(0.0177)	(0.0088)	(0.2058)
R^2	0.138	0.077	0.108	0.527	0.518
Observations	1,308	1,290	2,348	2,354	2,354

- Why would growing up during the expulsions have an impact on political behaviour in adulthood?
  - The impacts of the expulsions that we find for cohorts living in areas with higher proportions of Jews reflect the effects of other contemporaneous events that are correlated with the proportion of Jews within the region, not the Jewish expulsions per se.
  - The expulsions led to significant social changes that altered the political “resources” acquired by contemporary children and young adults, which in turn was reflected in adult political behaviour and engagement.

Contemporaneous Events and Other Confounders

- State-time Trends (State-specific policies)
- WWII Destruction
- Regional Macroeconomic Conditions
- Support for the Nazi and the Communist Party
- Turnout Rate
- Differential Regional Characteristics
- Catholic Share
- Differential Urbanization Rates

	Base Results (1)	State Trends (2)	WWII Destruction (3)	Unemp. Rate (4)	Pop. Size & Income (5)	Party Support (6)	Urban Share (7)	All (8)
				General Interest in Politics (Mean = 0.361)				
% of Jews in 1933	−0.0392**	−0.0337**	−0.0409**	−0.0384**	−0.0345*	−0.0392**	−0.0335**	−0.0353**
× Born btw. 1910–1927	(0.0174)	(0.0172)	(0.0175)	(0.0159)	(0.0180)	(0.0154)	(0.0156)	(0.0156)
Rubble per Cap.			0.0018					0.0007
× Born btw. 1910–1927			(0.0023)					(0.0027)
Unemployment Rate in 1932				0.0101				0.0073
× Born btw. 1910–1927				(0.0088)				(0.0141)
Population Size in 1933					−0.0001			−0.0001
× Born btw. 1910–1927					(0.0002)			(0.0002)
Income per Capita in 1932					−0.0001			−0.0002
× Born btw. 1910–1927					(0.0002)			(0.0002)
% of Votes to Nazi Party						0.0003		−0.001
× Born btw. 1910–1927						(0.0026)		(0.0039)
% of Votes to Communist Party						0.0048		0.005
× Born btw. 1910–1927						(0.0041)		(0.0062)
Urban Share							0.1319	−0.0796
× Born btw. 1910–1927							(0.1242)	(0.1581)
R^2	0.113	0.118	0.113	0.114	0.113	0.114	0.114	0.114
Observations	2,389	2,389	2,360	2,389	2360	2,389	2,389	2,360

	Base Results (1)	State Trends (2)	WWII Destruction (3)	Unemp. Rate (4)	Pop. Size & Income (5)	Party Support (6)	Urban Share (7)	All (8)
				Participation in Local Politics (Mean = 0.082)				
% of Jews in 1933	-0.0184**	-0.0191**	-0.0200**	-0.0180**	-0.0197***	-0.0211**	-0.0124*	-0.0151*
× Born btw. 1910–1927	(0.0074)	(0.0074)	(0.0082)	(0.0073)	(0.0066)	(0.0080)	(0.0071)	(0.0077)
Rubble per Cap.			0.0005					-0.0001
× Born btw. 1910–1927			(0.0013)					(0.0016)
Unemployment Rate in 1932				0.0067				0.0012
× Born btw. 1910–1927				(0.0042)				(0.0054)
Population Size in 1933					-0.0001			-0.0001
× Born btw. 1910–1927					(0.0002)			(0.0002)
Income per Capita in 1932					-0.0001			0.0001
× Born btw. 1910–1927					(0.0002)			(0.0002)
% of Votes to Nazi Party						0.0012		0.001
× Born btw. 1910–1927						(0.0015)		(0.0016)
% of Votes to Communist Party						0.0027		−0.0011
× Born btw. 1910–1927						(0.0018)		(0.0032)
Urban Share							0.1441*	0.1667
× Born btw. 1910–1927							(0.0590)	(0.1067)
R^2	0.055	0.057	0.055	0.056	0.055	0.056	0.057	.057
Observations	2,357	2,357	2,328	2,357	2,357	2328	2,357	2,328

The Empirical Evidence for Causal Channels

- Political ”Resources”: Socioeconomic Status
- Changes in social environment
- Civic Skills
- Opportunities for the Acquisition of Civic Skills

Political "Resources" and Civic Skills

	Schooling (1)	Income (2)	Employment (3)	Party Support (4)	Importance of Pol. Activity (5)	Volunteer (6)	Trust (7)	Church (8)
% of Jews in 1933	-0.407***	-0.133***	0.022	0.019	-0.056***	-0.031**	-0.049*	-0.031*
× Born btw.1910-1927	(0.071)	(0.040)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.027)	(0.019)
R^2	0.181	0.280	0.327	0.071	0.081	0.074	0.103	0.174
Observations	2,385	1,026	1,896	2,377	1,713	2,350	852	1,721

	Support a Party	Social Democrats	Christian Democratic U.	Left-Leaning (SPD,Greens)	Right-Leaning (CDU, CSU, FDH)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
% of Jews in 1933	0.0192	0.0516**	−0.0152	0.0091	−0.0039
× Born btw. 1910–1927	(0.0257)	(0.0249)	(0.0274)	(0.0241)	(0.0217)
R^2	0.071	0.107	0.192	0.148	0.150
Observations	2,377	1,478	1,478	1,478	1,478

- This study provides causal evidence on long-term consequences of the dismissal and exile of the Jewish population on individuals' political behaviour.
- We find that young Germans who grew up during the expulsions in Germany are significantly less likely to be interested or participate in politics.
- These results are much stronger for children and young adults for whom more of their impressionable years occurred during the expulsions and the Nazi regime.
- The negative impacts of the expulsions on political behaviour are due to the social changes that were brought about by the expulsions, that led to significant disturbances to the family and schooling environments in which young people were socialized, and are not the result of other contemporary events.

- The undocumented long-term impacts of the Jewish expulsions and the Nazi regime in Germany on Germans.
- We are able to demonstrate the links between social unrest in impressionable years, civic skills, socioeconomic stauts, and adult political attitudes, which have been discussed but rarely tested using empirical data.
- We show that events in childhood and young adulthood do indeed matter for political attitudes and behaviours in adulthood, although we do not find these attitudes to spill over to future generations of Germans.
- Our findings also reveal that social unrest have important consequences for adult political behaviour if they negatively affect the environment in which individuals obtained the social and material resources required to participate in politics.

The End

- Thank you for your comments!