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The Jews as a Problem for Modern European Political Logic

Introduction

The conference the proceedings of which are presented in this and further volumes attempted to deal with antisemitism with the noble aim of putting an end to this phenomenon. The achievement of this goal remains questionable, because hatred and rage are difficult to control and suppress. However, there are certainly ways to minimize the extent of its expressions through legislation and education, at least in countries in which historical knowledge is considered important—in countries that understand the dangers of antisemitism and are committed to human rights and dignity. Indeed, various types of action have been taken in recent decades. However, the recent upsurge of antisemitic expressions and events, and even the emergence of a phenomenon that I would call "Antisemitism Denial," demand more analysis. In order to develop strategies of coping and conflict management, scholarly understanding of the origins, dimensions, images, language, and conceptual problems of the phenomenon is required.

In 2009, David Engel wrote a provocative article in which he argued that the term antisemitism is not useful for scholars as an overarching analytical concept for a broad variety of encounters between Jews and non-Jews. This is because it is vague, scholars fail to agree upon a clear-cut definition of the concept, and putting events that occurred in remote places, under different circumstances, and in different times into one basket is problematic. Consequently, he declared that he avoids using this term in his studies.[1] Contrary to Engel, I believe that there are certain common elements that may be found in a variety of cases of anti-Jewish activities, ideas, and statements, which, at face value, are disconnected from each other. The cluster of these elements set the contours of "antisemitism," and it is the task of scholars to detect and analyze the recurring elements in events in different times and different situations in order to determine the elements that we sense constitute the phenomenon of "antisemitism."

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1 D. Engel, "Away from a Definition of Antisemitism: An Essay in the Semantics of Historical Description," in *Rethinking European Jewish History*, ed. J. Cohen and M. Rosman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 30–53.

Jews and Judaism as a Major Threat to Normalcy

According to my understanding, one typical element or feature of "antisemitism" is the fear of the threat that Jews and Judaism pose to normalcy, to accepted rules and standards. It is not just the fact that Jews are "different"—"others," as is often claimed—but that the assumed *nature* of their "otherness" poses a threat to a supposedly achievable harmonious world. In early Christianity, this found expression in the critique of the Jewish rejection of Jesus, as Paul says in his letter to the Thessalonians:

> the Jews who killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets and also drove us out. They displease God and are hostile to *everyone* in their effort to keep us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved. (1 Thess 2:15–16, New International Version)

In other words, not only did the Jews reject Jesus, but they "are hostile to *everyone*" (my emphasis, DM), and they tried to prevent Jesus' redeeming vision from being proposed to the entire non-Jewish world. This means that they are not only wicked but that they act against the improvement of the rest of the world or, in other words, they are anti-human. In a similar mode, though from a different, enlightened worldview, Baron Paul Henri Thiry d'Holbach made the following claim in the eighteenth century:

> The conduct of modern Jews indicates that, like their ancestors, they feel no obligation towards those who are not members of their holy nation. [...] [their] law [...] is obviously calculated to make men unsociable and maleficent [...] By regarding such a book [the Bible] as divinely inspired and as containing the rules of conduct, a man can only become unjust, without faith, without honor, without pity, in a word completely devoid of morals.[2]

That is, Jewish teachings as conceived in the Bible shape a human being who behaves entirely contrary to the requisite virtues of an enlightened society. D'Holbach's view is undoubtedly an enlightened (con)version of a Christian view that was deeply entrenched in Christian European culture.

   These are just two examples that present the element of viewing the Jews as a danger to society and normalcy, but there are many more. In modern times,

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2 P. H. Thiry d'Holbach, *Tableau des Saints, ou Examen de l'esprit, de la conduite, des maximes & du mérite des personages que le christiannisme révère & propose pour modèles* (London: n.p., 1770), 90–92; see the English translation, L. Poliakov, *The History of Antisemitism, Volume III: From Voltaire to Wagner*, trans. Miriam Kochan (London: Routledge & Keegan Paul, 1975), 123. See also M. Onfray, *Atheist Manifesto: The Case against Christianity, Judaism, and Islam*, trans. J. Leggatt (New York: Arcade, 2007).

with the emergence of the centralized nation-state and secularization, the inability of European societies to cope with the non-conforming complexity of Jewish identity contributed a new dimension to the element of the Jews as a mysterious threat to accepted standards.

Premodern Jewish Identity in Late Antiquity and in the European Middle Ages

Though the contents and nature of "Israel,"[3] "Judaism," and "Jewishness" changed over time, the very understanding of what it means to adhere to Judaism was formulated in about the first century. In Lee Levin's words:

> A web of common views, practices, and loyalties began crystallizing among Jews [in the first century] that gradually created a common foundation upon which Jewish cultural and communal creativity continued to develop, despite the ongoing challenges and vicissitudes.[4]

The web of common views was shaped and codified by rabbinic Judaism, which became the dominant force in mainstream Judaism. One of those views maintained that adherence to the Jewish collective meant the official acceptance of the Jewish religion and of Halacha as the codex of Jewish life.[5] Without being an essentialist regarding Judaism as a concept and worldview, it is clear that an essential *feature* of Judaism according to Halacha that crystallized in Late Antiquity is that religious and ethnic belonging were considered to be intertwined and inseparable. In the spirit of Ruth the Moabite's answer to Naomi in the Scroll

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3 On the very beginnings and emergence of "Israel," see A. Faust, *Israel's Ethnogenesis: Settlement, Interaction, Expansion and Resistance* (London: Equinox, 2006); A. Faust, "The Emergence of Israel and Theories of Ethnogenesis," in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Ancient Israel*, ed. S. Niditch (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2016), 155–73.

4 L. I. Levine, "Introduction," in *Jewish Identities in Antiquity: Studies in Memory of Menahem Stern*, ed. L. I. Levine and D. Schwartz (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), xvi.

5 On the development of "Jewish" identity in Antiquity, see the entire volume by Levine and Schwartz, *Jewish Identities in Antiquity*; M. D. Herr, "Zehuto Shel Am Yisrael Lifnei Habayit Ul'ahar Hurbano: Retzef 'o Shinuy? Megamot Beheker Toledot Yisrael Besof Yemei Bayit Sheni Uvitkufat Hamishna Vehatalmud" ["The Identity of the Jewish People before and after the Destruction of the Temple: Continuity or Change? The Various Directions in Research on the History of the Jewish People at the End of the Second Temple Period and in the Mishnaic and Talmudic Period"] *Cathedra* 137 (2009): 27–62 [Hebrew]; E. S. Gruen, *Constructs of Identity in Hellenistic Judaism* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2016).

of Ruth, "*Amech ami veElohayich Elohai*" ("Your people shall be my people, and your God my God.)."[6] In fact, the term "*am*" in Hebrew, which is usually translated as people, is semantically not identical with people in the ethnic sense but rather with a collective (as, for instance, in the original meaning of the term "*am ha'aretz*"[7]). However, within later contexts it also acquired the ethnic meaning of people. According to Halacha, the Jewish collective encompasses those who are born to a Jewish mother or who went through a halachically dictated and defined conversion process, which includes recognition of the One God of Israel and acceptance of the *mitzvot* (religious ordinances).

Basically, the union of religion and national belonging to *Am Israel*—the Jewish collective—should not be surprising. In the world of antiquity, each collective had its own deity or deities, and thus, from that perspective, Judaism was not different from other religions regarding its self-understanding, except for its idea of monotheism, which implied the non-recognition of the power and equality, or even the existence, of other deities. That is, the Jewish idea of deity was universalist but belonging to the Jewish entity, which demanded more than this recognition alone, was particularist. The fact that religion and ethnicity, or nationhood, are inseparable in Judaism is well-expressed by the Hebrew language, which has no word for "religion." The Hebrew word "*dat*," which has been used since the nineteenth century for "religion," is originally a Persian word that actually means "law." It was introduced in modern Hebrew to indicate the concept of "religion," as a result of the secularization process.

Christianity, and later Islam, introduced a major change in the ancient view of religion. Both were monotheist, like Judaism, yet they perceived their religions as being universal umbrellas for believers, standing above and apart from local ethnic identities and belonging. Thus, a separation between religious and ethnic belonging emerged (this was already expressed in the very early stages of the Christian critique of Judaism in the argument that Old Testament Judaism, as a redemptive faith, is exclusivist and not open to all human beings).

In the Medieval European world, the unique nature of Judaism and Jewish identity was not a problem for the political systems. From the perspective of the Christian reigning faith in Europe and the clear social and legal boundaries between religions, Jews were the "other." According to the formal principle teachings, Jews could and were tolerated (they were expected to recognize the truth of Christianity and accept Jesus' teachings at the end of days). Their pres-

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6 Ruth 1:16–17 (English Standard Version).
7 A. Oppenheimer, *The 'Am Ha-Aretz: A Study in the Social History of the Jewish People in the Hellenistic-Roman Period*, trans. I. H. Levine (Leiden: Brill, 1977).

ence in Christian milieus as a tolerated entity was negotiated through "privileges" that were extended by the rulers. However, there was an additional, important aspect: Throughout the Middle Ages, European societies were fragmented, linguistic identity was local, and social identity was shaped by the individual's belonging to class and—in the cities—to corporations. Within this mosaic structure of society, the Jews were almost always an urban group that fitted in as one of these corporations. As such, the fact that Jewish identity was both religious and ethnic posed no problem to the existing norms.

Jewish Identity vis-à-vis Modern European Political Concepts

This situation changed in the early modern period with the gradual emergence of modern centralized states;[8] the principle of sovereignty of the people, based on the idea of the autonomous authority of the individual;[9] the idea that society is founded on a "social contract" between individuals; and modern national concepts (which in recent historiography are described as "imagined communities"[10]). The democratic "social contract" principle put an emphasis on the state as a tool for achieving material benefits and security for the individual, a tool that should avoid intervening in spiritual affairs. It also put an emphasis on the individuals as being the basis of social entities. The centralized states, even when still in the form of kingdoms, often supported the enlightened idea of individualism, which embraced and legitimized the direct relationship between the state and its subjects. This new non-mediated relationship between the central power and the individuals became instrumental in crushing premodern, established corporate and class structures, and in enabling the central authority to amass more power incrementally.

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8 Historians have long been debating what a (modern) state is exactly. The American medievalist Joseph Strayer defined the rise of the state as "the appearance of political units persisting in time and fixed in space, the development of permanent, impersonal institutions, agreement on the need for authority, which can give final judgments, and acceptance of the idea that this authority should receive the basic loyalty of its subjects." See J. R. Strayer, *On the Medieval Origins of the Modern State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 10.
9 Shmuel Feiner, *'Et Hadasha: Yehudim Be'Eropa Bame'ah Hashemoneh 'Esreh, 1700–1750* [*A New Period: Jews in Europe in the Eighteenth Century, 1700–1750*] (Jerusalem: Merkaz Shazar, 2017) [Hebrew].
10 B. R. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991).

These developments began to affect the question of the Jews' status in the newly conceived form of states that developed in Central and Western Europe. From the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth century, enlightened thinkers advocated the naturalization and acceptance of Jews into society on an individual basis, although some of these thinkers harshly condemned "Judaism." The other side of the coin of the gradual implementation of the legal emancipation of the Jews, beginning with the French revolution in 1789, was the abolishment of the former legal status of the Jewish communities as corporations, which had been anchored in privileges and the demand from the Jews to redefine their identity as citizens of the new states. This was well expressed in the famous statement by Count Stanislas de Clermont-Tonnerre during the French National Assembly's debate on the emancipation of the Jews on December 23, 1789: "*Il faut tout refuser aux Juifs comme nation; il faut tout leur accorder comme individus*" ["We must refuse everything to the Jews as a nation and accord everything to Jews as individuals"].[11]

This idea was similarly expressed in the emancipation debates in France, the Netherlands, Westphalia, and elsewhere at the end of the eighteenth century and in the following decades. While the Western European liberal concept of the state allowed for the integration of the individual Jew, it would no longer tolerate a Jewish ethnic or national identity. If Jews wanted to be a nation, they could not demand equal rights as citizens in the state. On the other hand, the emerging centralized states, which elevated the status of the state above all other institutions, and the new conceptualization of nations made it necessary to cope with the fact that these states and nations contained adherents of different religious streams: Catholics and Protestants of many colors. As religious belonging was now perceived as a voluntary choice of individuals, that is, as secondary to national belonging, religion by itself was not seen as an obstacle to that belonging (although regarding Catholicism, there was a problem with the fact that it has a supreme authority seated in Rome, which gave rise to the accusation of Catholics as "ultra-montanists"). In the same spirit, Judaism could be accepted but *only* as a religion. There was an additional dimension to this development: as a result of centuries-long, anti-Jewish images stemming from the marginal state of the Jews

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11 Assemblée nationale session of Wednesday, December 23, 1789, *Archives parlementaires de 1787 à 1860*, collectif (Librairie administrative de Paul Dupont, 1867), 10:75, http://www.la culturegenerale.com/clermont-tonnerre-il-faut-tout-refuser-aux-juifs-comme-nation-et-tout-acc order-aux-juifs-comme-individus/; see the English translation as quoted in L. Hunt, ed., *The French Revolution and Human Rights: A Brief Documentary History* (Boston: Bedford and St. Martin's, 1996), 88.

and the limited scope of professions that they were allowed to profess, the terms "Judaism" and "Jew" were tainted and had a negative association.

Consequently, the states developed the attitude that Judaism could be treated like the other faiths and that the Jews as individuals had to be educated and adapted. This was reflected in their coercive policies, whose aim was the inclusion and the integration of the Jews who were living on their territories. "*Faire des juifs des citoyens utiles, concilier leurs croyances avec les devoirs des Français, éloigner les reproches qu'on leur a faits et remédier aux maux qui les ont occasionnés...*" ["turn the Jews into useful citizens, reconcile their beliefs with the duties of the French, remove the reproaches that were expressed regarding them, and remedy the harm that has been done to them"]—that was Napoleon's vision when he ordered convening the Assembly of Notables in 1806[12] and the ensuing Grand Sanhedrin, and the establishment of an umbrella organization for all Jews, the *Consistoire centrale des israélites de France* (Central Consistory of the Jews of France). As for Jews who wanted to embrace the new opportunity, they too had to cope with the dilemma from the perspective that the centuries-old nature of Judaism could not be maintained in the present situation; it had to be redefined as a religion.

The result was the invention of new terms for Judaism, as a religion, and for Jews, as belonging to that Jewish *religion*. In France, the new imposed organization (decreed on March 17, 1808) was named *Consistoire israélite*; the Jews were turned into *israélites*, a term that linked them to the Bible (apparently separating them from the linkage to the despised Talmud), and the religion was concurrently given the name *Culte mosaïque* (Mosaic religion).[13] It is not yet clear who invented the term *israélite*, but it is clear that the term was officially introduced when the consistory system in France and in its satellite states, the Netherlands and Westphalia, was established, all in 1808 (although the term was used already in the preceding one-to-two years in the French governmental bureaucracy's internal correspondence). *All* these consistories already included in their title the term *israélites*, while at the same time, the term "Jew" was still in use, often when relating to the Jews' assumed negative traits. Such was the case

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12 Letter from the French Minister of the Interior on behalf of the Emperor (Napoleon) ordering the convening of an assembly of Jewish representatives, July 23, 1806; Centre Historique des Archives Nationales F/19/11004 et 11005.

13 For the background, see S. Schwarzfuchs, *Napoleon, the Jews and the Sanhedrin* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979), 120 – 27; see also the extract from L. Berman, *Histoire des juifs de France des origines à nos jours* (Paris: Librairie Lipschutz, 1937), L. Berman, "Napoléon et la Question Juive," Le site du Judaïsme d'Alsace et de Lorraine, accessed April 6, 2020, http://judaisme.sdv.fr/histoire/historiq/consisto/berman.htm.

with the so-called Infamous Decree that was issued by the Napoleonic regime on the very same day (!) as the issuance of the aforementioned Consistory Decree, where only the term "Jew" was used.[14] Within a decade, *israélite/Israelit/israëliet* would become the official term for Jews in all these states, and from there it apparently spread all over the German *Sprachbereich* (area in which the German language is spoken).[15] This was accompanied by the important administrative

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14 R. Anchel, *Napoléon et les Juifs* (Paris: Presses Universitaires, 1928), 285 – 304. For easy access to the full text of the decree, see http://www.juif.org/blogs/7026,le-decret-infame-du-17-mars-1808.php.

15 In Westphalia, the *Königlich Westfälische Konsistorium der Israeliten* (Royal Westphalian Consistory of Israelites) was established by King Jérôme-Napoléon Bonaparte, Napoleon's youngest brother, on March 31, 1808; it existed until the downfall of the Napoleonic Empire in 1813. The living spirit among the Jewish fore-fighters for emancipation and religious reform in Westphalia was Israel Jacobson. Several weeks before the establishment of the consistory, of which he would become chairman, he held a speech thanking the new king for granting "citizenship rights to the subjects of the Jewish nation," without using the term Israelites; see I. Jacobson, *Rede am Dankfeste wegen des von Seiner Majestät dem Könige von Westphalen den Unterthanen jüdischer Nation ertheilten Bürgerrechts, gehalten in der Synagoge zu Cassel den 11. Februar 1808 von den Geheimen Finanz-Rathe Israel Jacobsohn aus Braunschweig* (Kassel: Hampe, 1808). Regarding the Netherlands, we have more information. Until 1796, Jews were considered as belonging to "*Joodsche Naties*" (Jewish Nations), a corporative term for ethno-religious strangers. After the September 2, 1796, "*gelykstaat der Joden*" (equality status of the Jews, i.e., the emancipation) decree of the Batavian Republic, the terms used were "Jewish communities" (resp. *Hoogduytsche Joodsche Gemeente en Portugeesche Joodsche Gemeente*), which meant that the term "nation" was abandoned. With the establishment of the "*Opperconsistorie*" (Supreme Consistory) in 1808 by King Louis Napoleon, the decrees and statutes used the terminology "*Joodsche of Israëlietische Gemeenten*," that is, both terms. With the collapse of Napoleonic France and the establishment of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Dutch Jewry was placed under a successor organization of the Supreme Consistory, the "*Israëlitisch Kerkgenootschap*" (Israelite Church Association), headed by the "*Commissie tot de zaken der Israëliten*" (Commission for the Affairs of the Israelites) in 1814; it was renamed "*Hoofdcommissie tot de zaken der Israëliten*" (Supreme Commission for Israelite Affairs) in 1817. This committee systematically would avoid the use of the term Jews and would fight it, perceiving it as an expression of non-acceptance of the Jews as equal citizens, although the term would live on in daily discourse, both among Jews and non-Jews. In an anonymous article—"*Iets over den naam van Israëliet en Jood*"— published in the periodical *Jaarboeken voor de Israëlieten* IV (1838), 360 – 64 (which was actually written by the editor Jozef Justus Belinfante), the author explains that "*Joden*" (Jews) indicates a *Volk* (People) while "*Israëlieten*" points to the "*inwendige beginselen*" (internal principles), that is, the religion; according to him one can use the term "Jews" only when a national, separate existence of a people is meant, yet "*Israëlieten*" always means "religious" and that is the proper concept for "this [i.e., the nineteenth century] era." I thank Dr. Bart Wallet (Amsterdam University) for providing me with these data.

step of placing the handling of the Jewish community organizations under the control of the Ministries of Cults (religions).[16]

From the perspectives of education, language, professions, and politics, this major change undoubtedly served as an important vehicle that paved the way for the gradual integration of Jews into Western European societies. It was also the rationale behind the initiatives for Jewish religious reform undertaken within the Jewish population. Yet, in spite of the pressure from the outside and the initiatives from within, the ethnic component of Jewish identity did not fully disappear. It continued to play a role as an important social undercurrent—the tendency to continue marrying within the Jewish communal borders, the maintaining of contacts with Jewish communities in other countries in various ways (including exchanges on halachic issues between rabbis), and more.[17]

This ethnic nature of Judaism was a major argument raised in the emancipation debates at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries by those who opposed Jewish emancipation and even by those who were not antisemitic, that is, those who did not talk about negative Jewish traits.[18] It was, of course, emphatically emphasized by the outspoken antisemi-

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16 A note regarding Czarist Russia is required here. With the first partition of Poland (1772), when Russia annexed the Byelorussian guberniyas of Vitebsk and Mogilev, which included areas with a considerable Jewish population, a similar change of terminology regarding the Jews occurred. In a proclamation by the governor general of Byelorussia, Count Zakhar Chernyshev, he used the term *yevreskiye*, derived from *yevrei* (Hebrews) instead of *zhidy*. According to Richard Pipes, this expressed the view that Jews were "an ordinary religious minority rather than a special nation-caste." Though the policies of Catherine II were in no way similar to the enlightened emancipatory approach in Western Europe, the idea of redefining the Jews as belonging to a religious denomination only was similar. See J. D. Klier, "*Zhid:* Biography of a Russian Epithet," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 60, no. 1 (1982): 2–3 (the quote from Pipes is on p. 3). See also M. Wolf, *Žid, Kritik einer Wortverbannung: Imagologie Israels zwischen staatspolitischem Kalkül und künstlerischer Verfremdung* (Munich: Sagner, 2005).
17 See, for instance, D. Michman, "Migration versus 'Species Hollandia Judaica.' The Role of Migration in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries in Preserving Ties between Dutch and World Jewry," *Studia Rosenthaliana* (1989): 54–76.
18 As was the case, for instance, with Abbé Grégoire in the emancipation discussions in the French assembly and with some parliamentarians in the Dutch emancipation discussions in the Batavian (i.e., Dutch) assembly. See A. Goldstein Sepinwall, "Les paradoxes de la régénération révolutionnaire. Le cas de l'abbé Grégoire," *Annales historiques de la Révolution française* 321 (2000): 69–90; J. Michman, *Dutch Jewry during the Emancipation Period 1787–1815: Gothic Turrets on a Corinthian Building* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1995).

tes, whose arguments included a plethora of derogatory remarks.[19] However, all continued to use the term *Juden/juifs/joden*.

A different process regarding Jewish identity occurred in Eastern Europe, in Czarist Russia, and in its successor states after World War I. Here there was no emancipatory trajectory like the one in Central and Western Europe. In these mostly Christian and multi-ethnic states, the ethno-religious nature of Judaism remained dominant, both in the eyes of the Gentiles—the authorities, as well as the population—and the Jews themselves, until the second half of the nineteenth century.[20] However, since then, Jewish society underwent a considerable secularization process. Due to the Russian context, which included not only multi-ethnicity but also widespread popular and state-sanctioned anti-Jewishness, those secularized Jews tended now to interpret their Jewishness in national terms, thus adapting themselves to the multi-national norms, which were embraced also by the general, non-Jewish, secular revolutionary movements. As is well known, Zionism, Jewish Autonomism, and Jewish Territorialism, sprouted on this ground. After World War I, Jewish communities in Eastern Europe would be treated by the new successor states (Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and the USSR) as national minorities. In post-World War I Poland, the Jewish religious communities officially became the legal structure of the Jews as a minority, including all Jewish parties, even the anti-religious socialist Bundist party.

Nevertheless, a multi-ethnic political system, whether in Czarist Russia or in Austro-Hungary before World War I, and in some East European countries after it, did not always embrace a clear national interpretation of Jewish identity. As the proportional dimensions of the nations and minorities were constantly moni-

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19 The literature on this is extensive, although mostly to be found within the larger context of the historiography on emancipation struggles in the different European countries. See E. Fuchs, *Die Juden in der Karikatur. Ein Beitrag zur Kulturgeschichte* (Munich: Albert Langen, 1921); S. Ragins, *Jewish Responses to Anti-Semitism in Germany, 1870–1914: A Study in the History of Ideas* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College, 1980), 1–22; P. Birnbaum and I. Katznelson, eds., *Paths of Emancipation: Jews, States and Citizenship* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); M. Brenner, S. Jersch-Wenzel, and M. A. Meyer, eds., *German-Jewish History in Modern Times, Volume 2: Emancipation and Acculturation, 1780–1871* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); Sh. Volkov, "Antisemitismus als kultureller Code," in *Jüdisches Leben und Antisemitismus im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1990), 13–36; G. Miron and A. Szalai, eds., *Yehudim 'al Parashat Derachim: Siah Hazehut Hayehudit Behungariya Bein Mashber Lehithaddeshut, 1908–1926* [*Jews at the Crossroads: The Jewish Identity Discourse in Hungary Between Crisis and Renewal, 1908–1926*] (Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2008) [Hebrew].
20 In spite of the introduction of the term *yevreskiye* in Czarist Russia, as pointed out in note 17, the ethnic component remained central, due to the fact that in the multi-ethnic context, the different ethnicities also had different faiths and, thus, religion was identified by the ethnic factor.

tored for a variety of purposes (political representation, education, and more), the standards used to define Jewish national belonging were often contested. At times, the official yardstick was the language spoken by the Jews (Yiddish), which then could result in counting German-speaking or Polish-speaking Jews as Germans or Poles. Sometimes religious adherence served as the definition, which would then exclude converts and partners in mixed marriages. Occasionally, it was left to the Jews themselves to state their national belonging, according to their own self-definition.[21]

Thus, toward the end of the nineteenth century and in the first decades of the twentieth century, Jews and Judaism were formally defined in opposing ways in different political settings in Europe—as a religion in the West, as a nation (or ethnic group) in the East. Yet even then, it was not so simple. Due to secularization, non-religious Western European *israélites* were defined according to the religion to which they did not want to adhere. In Eastern Europe, where being religious was still considered by the authorities and many of the masses to be a yardstick for being a decent person, secularized Jews who expressed their anti-religiousness toward Judaism, as well as toward Christianity, were perceived as an undermining element. Additionally, the authorities sometimes defined Jewish national belonging very differently than did many Jews.

Jews Are Mysterious

At the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, because of the deep changes in political thought and the various and even opposing realities on the ground to which Jews had to adapt, there was no longer a clear Jewish identity or a definition thereof. The integral ethno-religious identity of the past could not be maintained, and no single broadly accepted new type of identity had emerged. Instead, Jewishness appeared in many, sometimes opposing forms. Due to the emancipation and democratization processes, and the new capitalist economy that developed, Jews entered a broad array of professions, mostly those that emerged in the new economy. Moreover, there were Jews —such as Heinrich Heine—who converted to Christianity simply in order to have an "*entrée billet* to European culture,"[22] only to pronounce their "Jewishness" even more thereafter. The chameleon picture of Jewish identity was unparalleled

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21 This is one of the reasons that it is impossible to provide an accurate count of the Jews in Europe on the eve of the Holocaust.

22 "Entree Billet zur Europäischen Kultur"; see the expression in M. Windfuhr, *Heinrich Heine: Historisch-kritische Gesamtausgabe der Werke* (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1993), 10:313.

by any other group in Europe and made the Jews even more mysterious and un-graspable than in the past: there were Jews throughout Europe, and they could not be put in one conceptual box. Adolf Stoecker, the court chaplain to Emperor Wilhelm I in Germany, stated that Orthodox Jewry "is a dead religious form," and Reform Judaism "has even less religious significance. It is neither Judaism nor Christianity." He added, "Thanks to Marx and Lassalle, the Jews have their friends among the Social Democrats. Some of the nihilists in Russia are also Jews."[23] And Wilhelm Marr explained that:

> Up until 1848, the Jews in Germany were predominantly democratically inclined, or at least pretended to be. Later, Jewry dispersed into the parliamentary parties. [...] Two-thirds of our semi-official literature is produced by Jews. [...] The daily press is overwhelmingly in the hands of Jews [...] Three-quarters of the drama and art criticism are in Jewish hands.[24]

There are countless more expressions regarding the Jews—statements, writings, cartoons—that point to their many disparate appearances, which supposedly hide that they are essentially one collective that is alien and has a common un-dermining goal.[25]

This is precisely the situation to which modern antisemitism tried to provide an answer, while using trivialized scientific concepts—and, in fact, it is at this stage of antisemitism that the very term "antisemitism" was coined. The various forms of modern antisemitism were essentialist—Jewish identity was not some-thing circumstantial, resulting from the Jews' religion or their long-standing sep-aration from "normal" society, or from proper education, which could be changed, improved and healed but something biological, internal, inherent to all Jews, in spite of the many disguises and masks that Jews wear. Bruno Bauer claimed in 1843, that the emancipation of the Jew resembles the attempt to wash a "negro [the term used at the time, mostly negatively, for black people]

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23 A. Stoecker, "Unsere Forderungen an das moderne Judentum (1879)," in *Christlich-Sozial: Reden und Aufsätze* (Bielefeld and Leipzig: 1885), 143–54; see the English translation in R. S. Levy, *Antisemitism in the Modern World. An Anthology of Texts* (Lexington and Toronto: D. C. Heath, 1991), 58–66.

24 W. Marr, *Der Sieg des Judenthums über das Germanenthum—Vom nichtconfessionellen Stand-punkt aus betrachtet* (Bern: Costenoble, 1879); see the English translation in Levy, *Antisemitism in the Modern World*, 85.

25 For Jews remaining as the "other" after emancipation, see also D. Aberbach, "The Patriotism of Gentlemen with Red Hair: European Jews and the Liberal State, 1789–1939," *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* (2017), http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/69566/1/Aberbach_The% 20patriotism%20of%20gentlemen%20with%20red%20hair_published_2017%20LSERO.pdf.

in order to turn him into a white person."[26] The new racial theories provided antisemites with a tool that could put all the different Jews into one basket—the Jews as a race, or better, as a counter-race. Racial antisemitism rationalized the "otherness" of the Jews, tackling also the problem of the "non-Jewish Jew." As Eugen Dühring said:

> A Jewish Question will continue to exist even if all Jews would turn their backs on their [own] religion and convert to one of our leading churches. Indeed, I argue that in such a case the argument between us and the Jews would make itself perceptible as an even more urgent necessity than it is the case without that. Precisely the baptized Jews are those who penetrate without obstacles in the broadest way into all channels of society and into common political life. They provided themselves with a *passe-partout* [passkey] and push their tribe also to places where Jews belonging to the [Jewish] religion cannot follow them.[27]

Moreover, the racial idea did not have to be taken too strictly in the biological sense. Racial terminology was used also by religious Christians, such as Adolf Stoecker,[28] or liberal nationalists, such as the historian Heinrich von Treitschke.[29] Other thinkers, such as Houston Stewart Chamberlain,[30] and, later, intellectuals

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26 "*Wer den Juden als Juden emanzipiert wissen will, nimmt sich nicht nur dieselbe unnütze Mühe, als wenn er einen Mohren weiß waschen wollte, sondern er täuscht sich selbst bei seiner unnützen Quälerei: indem er den Mohren einzuseifen meint, wäscht er ihn mit einem trockenen Schwämme. Er macht ihn nicht einmal naß.*" B. Bauer, *Die Fähigkeit der heutigen Juden und Christen, frei zu sein: einundzwanzig Bogen aus der Schweiz* (Zürich u. Winterthur: Georg Herwegh, 1843), 71, reprinted in B. Bauer, *Feldzüge der reinen Kritik* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1968), 175–95.

27 "*Eine Judenfrage wurde daher auch existiren, wenn alle Juden ihrer Religion den Rücken gekehrt und zu einer der bei uns vorherrschenden Kirchen übergetreten waren. Ja ich behaupte, dass in diesem Falle die Auseinandersetzung zwischen uns und den Juden sich als ein noch weit dringenderes Bedurfniss fühlbar machen würde, als auch schon ohnedies der Fall ist. Grade die getauften Juden sind diejenigen, die ohne Hindernisse am weitesten in alle Canale der Gesellschaft und des politischen Gemeinlebens eindringen. Sie haben sich gleichsam mit einem Passepartout versehen und schieben ihren Stamm auch dahin vor, wohin ihnen die Religionsjuden nicht folgen konnen.*" E. Dühring, *Die Judenfrage als Racen-, Sitten- und Culturfrage. Mit einer weltgeschichtlichen Antwort* (Karlsruhe and Leipzig: H. Reuther, 1881), 3.

28 Stoecker, *Unsere Forderungen an das modern Judentum*, 143–54.

29 H. von Treitschke, *Ein Wort über unser Judenthum* (Berlin: G. Reimer, 3rd unaltered edition: 1880).

30 H. S. Chamberlain, *Die Grundlagen des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts* (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1899).

in the Weimar period, would develop the idea of cultural or psychological racism.[31]

In this context it is not surprising that antisemites, whether racists or not, insisted on using the term "Jew," and not *israélite* (in French)/*Israelit* (in German)/*israeliet* (in Dutch), because the latter was perceived as a disguise. What emerges in the new antisemitic discourse is not just the return from *israélite*/*Israelit*/*israeliet* to "Jew" but the constant use of the *generalizing* term of "the Jew" (*le juif/der Jude/de jood*), which conceptualized Jewish identity in an abstract way and, at the same time, allowed for the caricatured presentation of the Jews in one image with the assumed typical characteristics of "the Jews."[32] To counter this, the complexity of Jewish modern reality was simplified through pseudo-scientific concepts and pronounced visual representations. This happened, of course, against the background of the rapid economic and social changes that were accompanied by extreme tensions and in the context of democratization and politicization, which demanded the mobilization of the masses. Thus, modern antisemitism provided an answer to a situation in which modern political concepts had to cope with the (apparently) unsolvable "problem" of the nature of Jewish identity. In spite of the metamorphosis of the political structures in the modern period, which to a certain extent *were* favorable to Jews, Jewish identity once again turned Jewishness into a "problem."

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31 A. Varshizky, "Between Science and Metaphysics: Fritz Lenz and Racial Anthropology in Interwar Germany," *Intellectual History Review* 27, no. 2 (2017): 247–72.
32 Fuchs, *Die Juden in der Karikatur*; M. A. Matard-Bonucci, ed., *ANTISÉmythes. L'image des juifs entre culture et politique (1848–1939)* (Paris: Nouvea-Monde, 2005); G. Silvain and J. Kotek, *La carte postale antisémite de l'affaire Dreyfus à la Shoah* (Paris: Berg, 2005).

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