

JEW HATRED IN ITS HISTORICAL CONTEXT

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There is little doubt that after World War II, and the terrible Holocaust that befell the Jewish people, new approaches began to develop with respect to the phenomenon known as anti-semitism. In the wake of Nazi Germany's attempt to put into practice an abstract theory — "The War Against the Jews" — involving the indiscriminate murder of millions, and at times coming into conflict with political and military needs, the *weltanschauungen* of both Jews and non-Jews were badly shaken. This historical experience served without a doubt as the turning point in the renewed discussion of anti-semitism, its roots, manifestations, and the problem of its continuity over the course of time. Prior to World War II, despite the intensity of attacks on Jews, anti-semitism was looked upon as a marginal or secondary phenomenon, a propaganda device, which was discussed seriously only in Zionist circles.

Moreover, attempts that were made before the Holocaust to explain anti-

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semitism in general dealt with isolated manifestations, concentrating on particular historical situations (government persecutions or outbursts of pogroms), placing the accent on an examination of the Jews' condition in a given country, etc. Under the influence of the Holocaust many attempts were made by psychologists, sociologists, and historians to find some general significance in anti-semitism, and in some extreme cases, to discover something universal in it. And from here it is just one more step to the central problem — perhaps the decisive matter in understanding the essence of anti-semitism — the problem of its historical continuity. Is the hatred and rejection of both Jews and Judaism — known as anti-semitism since the last quarter of the nineteenth century — the same phenomenon throughout history in all its manifestations or, perhaps, is this word simply a catch-all for all social, political, and psychological, phenomena which, thanks to terminological or ideological convenience, caught on?

For a fitting examination of this problem, one should note that the source of the discussion was primarily emotional, and stemmed from the need for introspection once the full scope of the Holocaust became clear. In this respect it resembles the state-of-mind following World War I when public opinion was shaken by the horrible slaughter of millions which, in retrospect, seemed contrary to all ethical and logical considerations. Once again the search for the guilty ones, for those who bear the responsibility began. As a result, the German people and their national characteristics were carefully scrutinized in order to view their relations with the Jews in historical context.

In a similar manner, the histories and culture of Eastern and Central European peoples have also been examined, that is, those on whose territory the slaughter was carried out, and who were among its more important perpetrators: Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Romanians, Croatians, and Hungarians. Not much time passed and voices began to be heard alleging that the guilt of the murdered is no less than that of the murderers, partners in crime so to speak. The main supposition was that a large share of the guilt falls on the Jews themselves and, in particular, on their pre-Holocaust leaders who did not understand the political map of their times and even saw in anti-semitism a factor contributing to Jewish unity — a sort of ally. Jewish leaders under Nazi rule are especially guilty in that they aided their persecutors in their attempts to register, concentrate, and ultimately deport Jews to the death camps. However, the very preoccupation with the problem of guilt led scholars to examine the Holocaust in a broader historical perspective. They began searching for its historical roots, its connections with anti-semitism in earlier periods, and in this manner arrived at an examination of Jew-hatred in its various forms and manifestations.

One can say, that under the influence of the Holocaust three approaches to the study of anti-semitism's causes took form. One claimed that the issue of Jewish—non-Jewish relations (between majority peoples and the Jewish minority that lives among them) is not a real problem, but a deception exploited by propagandists for their own purposes, be they psychological, social or political. They maintain that there never was a real Jewish problem, not even in Germany, and therefore there was no real antagonism between Jews and non-Jews. Anti-semitism came about, in their opinion, as a result of the manipulation of historical prejudices and from the focusing of the public's bitterness on an imaginary enemy. In this manner, anti-semitism was reduced to a sort of historical digression. No doubt, apologetics and nostalgia as well as the desire to preserve the lovely dream of German-Jewish co-existence, played a major role in the formulation of this idea which found expression in Eva Reichmann's book.¹

Another approach is evident in Hannah Arendt's book which places a significant share of the blame for the growth of anti-semitism, and even the extermination of the Jews on the Jews themselves, their leaders, their conduct, and their course of action.² According to her, at a certain stage in modern European history Jews ceased to perform a meaningful social function and only derived benefit from their wealth and status. On account of this, a real conflict was created between Jews and all other social classes who subsequently identified the Jews with the State. Had it not been for the blindness of these Jews, who did not understand the roots of this social development, anti-semitism would not have taken on the forms that it did. Moreover, had Jewish leaders not become so emeshed in the enemy establishment, the Holocaust would not have taken on the dimensions and shape that it did.

Without getting into a detailed discussion of Hannah Arendt's argument (and others of similar viewpoint) as expressed in two works—one dealing with the sources of anti-semitism (in her book *The Origins of Totalitarianism*), and the other dealing with the Holocaust (in her book on the Eichmann trial) one can say that her reasoning is influenced by assumptions that were wide-spread in German society, and to a certain degree by anti-semitic and even Nazi attitudes.³ After all, the anti-semites' argument over the course of time has been that since hatred for Jews existed in different periods and among different peoples, the reason for it cannot be posited

1. Eva G. Reichmann, *Hostages of Civilization: The Social Sources of National-Socialist Anti-Semitism*. London, 1950.

2. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. New York, 1956.

3. Idem, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. New York, 1963.

in the temporal or social conditions in which the Jews live, but in the Jews themselves. There is nothing so amazing about the acceptance of non-Jewish attitudinal patterns by students of anti-semitism including, among other things, the image of the Jew as perceived by the non-Jewish world. The Holocaust did bring about a change in values and made for a more independent view among many Jews but Hannah Arendt is not one of them, and is set apart from other scholars by the extremism inherent in her use of the negative stereotype of the Jew.

Another approach, which is diametrically opposed to the first two, was advanced by my late mentor and teacher, Professor Ben-Zion Dinur in his article "Diaspora Communities and their Destruction"⁴ which was written under the immediate influence of the Holocaust. In his opinion, there is no real novelty in the Holocaust since the hatred and destruction of the Jewish people have always been a part of Jewish and Gentile history. Proof of this is the decline of the Jews in the Greco-Roman world when millions disappeared during the transition to the Middle Ages, presumably due to annihilation although there is no explicit evidence that supports this contention. The process which Dubnow called by the picturesque label "The Migration of Jewish Centers" is, according to Dinur, nothing more than the disruption and destruction of Jewish life. What happened in the Greco-Roman world happened again in the Middle Ages during the Black Plague, and Chmielnicki massacres, and once again in the Modern Era towards the end of World War I in the Ukraine — and twenty years later in the Holocaust. As a matter of fact, the destruction of the Jewish people was, from the beginning, the rule in the relationship of large parts of the Gentile world towards the Jews, the Holocaust of our time being only more radical and systematic. Thus Dubnow's words about migrations in the Diaspora, and transfers of Jewish centers are nothing but an embellishment of historical reality: Not wanderings of Jewish centers — but their destruction.

More than a generation has passed since the formulation of these views, and still it seems that we will never entirely succeed in detaching ourselves from the terrible trauma of the Holocaust. Nonetheless, the student who attempts to examine anti-semitism, and its place in the life of the Jews and other peoples of Europe must strive to cut himself off from the emotional pressure of the Holocaust. Moreover, we must remember that despite the Holocaust and the great shock that it caused large segments of public

4. *Knesset*, 8 (1944), pp. 46–60. Available as well in a collection of his works: *Dorot U Reshumot*, Jerusalem, 1978, pp. 175–192.

opinion in Europe and America (and even in other parts of the world), and despite the establishment of the State of Israel which was to be the final answer to this problem, anti-semitism to this very day has not ceased to be a weighty factor in various countries and in many areas of life. Even today these anti-semitic arguments exude freshness and vitality. Those who have recourse to them do so with great fervour, despite their occasionally literal reliance on things that were said hundreds of years ago. Indeed, one who reads anti-semitic writings of ancient times, and then examines anti-Jewish arguments of the Middle Ages and the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is astonished by the similarity of their arguments and reasoning. This fact alone is enough to stimulate us to study anti-semitism not just as Jews trying to understand a phenomenon which still plays a central role in our lives, but as civilized men contemplating an unusual, and amazingly persistent phenomenon.

Let us now take a look at some explanations of Jew-hatred, and anti-semitism as they appear in the scholarly literature of the post-World War II era. The more accepted explanations are those that derive from the field of psychology, that is, attempts to draw a causal or statistical connection between anti-semitism and people of a particular psychological make-up — those who experienced some sort of trauma or exhibit anti-social attitudes — and to look there for the roots of anti-semitism.⁵ Similar to these are several sociological studies whose point of departure is the assumption that a certain degree of aggression exists in every group of people which finds expression in their relations with aliens. According to these scholars then, anti-semitism is just another expression of this complex.⁶ In the same vein, attempts were made to explain anti-semitism in the context of minority- and majority-group relations, between in- and out-groups. In the words of Professor Salo Baron we discern the old motive — The Dislike of the Unlike — which, supposedly is the universal key to understanding anti-semitism. Its intensity is explained by the concurrence of several factors which determine relations of a minority group under conditions of group tension. Anyone who reads the opening section of the heading “Anti-semitism” in the *Encyclopedia Hebraica* will see that its peculiarity is explained by the combination of several negative attitudes towards a minority: Hatred of the different, of the weak, and of the alien. Since these three find a common focal point in the Jewish people, the roots of anti-semitism must be engendered in them.

5. T.W. Adorno *et al.* *The Authoritarian Personality*, New York, 1950, Ch. III; D.J. Levinson, *The Study of Antisemitic Ideology*; N.W. Ackerman and M. Jahoda, *Anti-semitism and Emotional Disorder*, New York, 1950.

6. Perez F. Bernstein, *Jew-hate as a Sociological Problem*, New York, 1951.

Several of these explanations have been supported by wide-ranging field studies and systematic investigation. But even so there is a fundamental difficulty in accepting them. After all, it is a fact that the measure of adverse feeling towards Jews is not equal in all countries and cultures. Indeed there are great differences in the attitudes towards Jews on the part of their "host" peoples. Logically speaking, if the basic psychological factors that are grounded in the individual's personality were the main reason for the attitude to Jews, and if this stemmed from the psychological or social make-up of groups, cultures, economic classes and the like, then such manifestations must be more or less similar between peoples who find themselves in similar stages of cultural and social development. But it is a fact that there are differences in various peoples' relationship with the Jews, and the degree of intensity involved. But an even greater problem derives from the fact that the very definitions of these negative attitudes raise doubts. Many anti-semites describe the Jew not as being weak, but rather as possessing satanic power threatening the structure of the surrounding society, its economy, culture, etc. According to their arguments, the struggle with the Jews is a crucial struggle *because* of their tremendous power. Scorn for the weak appears in only a few instances,

Even more complicated is the conception of the Jew as someone who is different from other human beings. According to this thesis, hatred for the Jew who is different in terms of life-style and appearance (the observant Jew replete with earlocks and traditional dress) should have been the principal manifestation of anti-semitism. And so it was at times, for example, in placards and caricatures. However, in the ideological and theological literature of anti-semitism, hatred is directed at Jews whose life-style and appearance *resemble* that of the non-Jewish world. In real life, hatred for the Jew who tried to pass for Gentile was more intense than the hatred for Jews who represented the traditional image. As the ideology of modern anti-semitism gained strength the negative attitude toward the assimilated Jew — those who resembled the Christian world in life-style, dress, and sometimes even in religion (converts) — became exacerbated on the basis of the claim that the really great danger stems from those of Jewish origin outset turn Jews into a marginal or even casual element, and by doing so make the problem one of explaining the phenomenon in the framework of world history rather than as a factor in Jewish history.

Another widespread claim is that Jews, as a minority group dispersed among many countries, serve as a convenient outlet for the release of the majority peoples' tensions and anxieties. Those who argue so are not disturbed by a problem which is central from the standpoint of Jewish history, that is: What forges minorities in many countries into a single body, and

what then gives this conglomerate its sense of unity? As is known, there is no lack of minority groups in a given society, just as there is no lack of tension and hatred between majority- and minority-groups in a given place, yet none of this has ever developed into a continuous and persistent phenomenon like Jew-hatred over the course of its existence. An additional difficulty in explaining anti-semitism as a function of their dispersal is the fact that Jew-hatred existed in places where there were no Jews at all for hundreds of years, as in Spain after the expulsion or in Moscovite Russia. In sum, one can say that these explanations miss the target in spite of the importance of the studies on which they are based. They explain the *exploitation* of the hatred for Jews by individuals or groups in psychological or social distress, or for the sake of attaining political objectives, but do not grapple with the factors and causes involved in the *genesis* of this hatred.

Perhaps those scholars are correct who argue that tension between non-Jews and Jews does not stem primarily from the psychological make-up of individuals or from socio-psychological factors, but from real socio-economic causes such as competition, conflicts of interest, etc. According to this approach, the conflict that prevails, for instance, between the working or peasant class, and their exploiters gives rise to antagonism between the former and the Jews because the latter belongs to the parasitic and exploitative classes. The hatred of the middle class for the Jews is a result of their being merchants and middlemen, finding therefore its basis in their competitive relationship with urban elements. The same can be said for the hatred of the upper classes towards these newcomers, 'pushing their way to the head of the line' in order to grab positions of influence, as the Jewish plutocracy of the nineteenth century used to be described. All in all, anti-semitism is an expression of the real social tension that exists between Jews and other classes.

The problem with this explanation is that, in spite of conflicts between various classes, they stood united in their hatred for the Jews who, in almost no situation appear as allies of a non-Jewish group. Therefore, it is doubtful that these classes would have distinguished the Jews as their enemies merely from the standpoint of their interests had there not been who join the monastic order or become European radicals; from those who look as if they have broken altogether with Judaism. One of the paradoxes of modern anti-semitism is that it was the "Non-Jewish Jew"; that is, the Jew who divorced himself from his ethnic surroundings and culture, who attained conspicuous success in non-Jewish society such as Disraeli, Sarah Bernhardt, Marx, and Trotsky, it was he who served in the anti-semites' eyes as a symbol of ascendant and inimical Jewry, "the different

and the alien". That is to say, people of total or partial Jewish origin, at times even those not at all of Jewish origin, who did not see themselves as Jews, and in truth were much closer to the Christian world: they were represented by anti-semites as the embodiment of Judaism and as its leaders. If Baron Rothschild, the so-called "King of the Jews" was deemed offensive in Christian eyes, it was not because of his refusal to eat pheasant and snails. In fact, the life-style of members of the House of Rothschild had much more in common than not, with the behaviour of its Christian surroundings.

Similar to this is the matter of peculiarity. It was accepted among various anti-semites that the peculiarity of Jews as opposed to non-Jews, Semites as opposed to Aryans, causes instinctive opposition, revulsion, and recoiling — all of which stem from "racial fear" (*Rassenangst*). However, it has already been proven that "racial fear" even in Nazi ideology was not a real fear, but a propaganda slogan. Had this been a phobia whose source was "racial dissimilarity" then those who subscribed to it would have distinguished between people according to objective criteria, that is: Tall blond-haired, blue-eyed people would have been thought of as Aryan and short dark skinned people with long noses as Semites (and, according to jokes that were often told in the 1930's, a majority of Nazi leaders would have been classified as Semites). But devotees of the racial doctrine, supposedly repulsed by "the other", did not determine "race" according to biological properties, but according to affiliation with religious congregations, and by legal definitions. And that is yet another proof that "peculiarity" is not an unmediated reaction to a particular person or group, but a social or cultural convention. Thus, it is difficult to explain anti-semitism on the basis of these attitudes which themselves warrant explanation.

Still, in connection with the attempt to explain anti-semitism by means of socio-psychological hypotheses: even if we agree that potential aggression exists in individuals and groups, finding expression with respect to groups defined as "external" or "marginal", the question still is: Why does it assume such a constant and extreme form towards Jews? Explanations of this sort deal very little with the question of the Jews' specific character or even with their status in the surrounding society and direct most of their attention to the psychological, social, or political structure of the majority peoples. It would appear that explanations of this sort from the a deeply rooted image of the Jews as an undesirable group. Moreover, despite the supposedly realistic nature of this approach, the facts contradict its basic supposition that Jews constituted a class of exploiters. This view was disseminated in the nineteenth century just when the pauperization of the Jewish masses was gaining force, and not just in Eastern Europe, but

even in Central and Western Europe — when Jews moved from service and brokerage occupations to physical labour and a class of Jewish workers came into being (in Eastern Europe and in immigration centres) which played an active role in Jewish society. Moreover, that the negative image of the Jew is antecedent to the social class factor, is demonstrated by the fact that adherents of this approach do not see anything wrong in an overall increase in the number of lawyers, scientists, or artists, whereas a rise in the number of Jewish practitioners of these same professions represents, allegedly, a danger to society in that it distorts society's character, upsets the social equilibrium, and so on.

The failure of the above mentioned explanations led some scholars back to the traditional, time-honoured explanation, that is, to the basic conflict between Judaism and Christianity. From the very start, Christianity appeared on the historical stage as a negation of Judaism and, when it attained power in affairs of State, it turned opposition to Judaism and oppression of the Jews into an official slogan. It pushed Jews into the margins of society, thus forcing them into economic activity and a social class that aroused their neighbours' hatred. There is no doubt that this argument has a good deal of truth to it despite the fact that Jew-hatred — both literary and popular — anteceded the advent of Christianity. Not a few of the early Christians bore it within themselves as a result of their pagan upbringing. However, Christian Jew-hatred is only one component of a multi-faceted phenomenon, decisive proof for this being the fact that anti-semitism did not lessen with the decline of Christianity's influence on government, culture, or society. One can even say that the opposite is true: that the strengthening of modern anti-semitism was concomitant with the decline of the influence of religious belief, and that the anti-semitic movement won its successes through secular and, at times anti-Christian arguments.

We conclude with an additional explanation, one that is traditionally popular among anti-semites who see the cause of anti-semitism in the Jews themselves. So claimed Servatius, Eichmann's attorney during the trial, and Dostoevsky, who in his famous article on the Jewish question asked: Why has everyone always hated the Jews? Can some general meaning be imputed to this phenomenon? After all, we are speaking of societies that have existed throughout history, beginning in the Hellenistic Era up to the present time. The peoples who persecuted the Jews had different social systems, cultures, and governments, yet common to all was their hatred of the Jews. The only possible explanation for this is that the cause of anti-semitism is inherent in the Jews themselves: in their way of life, law, and deeds. The Jews have always persevered in their historic existence as

a socio-religious group, the majority of them abstaining from intermingling with Gentiles or rejecting assimilation. During different periods in history, Jews appeared as the competitors of non-Jews, and claimed spiritual supremacy. According to the doctrine of election, they saw themselves as bearers of the religion of truth, of supreme ethics. As a result, the Gentile world reacted adversely by withdrawing from them, and eventually looked upon the Jews with revulsion. There is nothing surprising in the fact that a socio-religious group possessing separate goals would arouse hatred and opposition. But it is difficult to accept this explanation; if anti-semitism had been an instinctive revulsion towards the Jewish people or an unmediated reaction to them, the acceptance of Jews by the surrounding society would not have been possible. Moreover, how was it that many countries, and groups in Christian Europe declared the principle of the Jews' integration and their equality as an accepted legal and social principle?

Let us compare the status of the Jews — their occupational distribution and cultural level — at the end of the eighteenth century with that of the end of the nineteenth (or beginning of the twentieth) century. We will see one of the great success stories of European (and perhaps even American) history. This is the story of a marginal group cut off from society by being engaged in a limited number of occupations, and by living in areas which, geographically and culturally, were remotely situated — and was thus denied access to the surrounding world (and for the most part did not even desire it). In the course of one hundred years, the Jews became a group whose members reside, to a large degree in the large cosmopolitan centres of the world, occupying a respectable place in several important areas of modern society: in economic life, scientific and artistic creation, political activity, etc. Had this recoiling of the Gentile from the Jews really been a decisive factor in their relations, it would be difficult to explain this sort of development, one that did indeed take place in the nineteenth century. Therefore, there is no substance to simplistic ideas advanced by anti-semites and Jews alike who claim that the very existence of the Jewish people arouses the Gentiles' hatred, or to the sayings "Esau hates Jacob" or "The Eternal hatred for the Eternal People": they are contradicted by the very course of Jewish history. It is a fact that many Europeans were prepared to ignore the Jew's religious and social peculiarities and accept them in their society. There are examples of aid and friendship towards Jews, or philo-semitism, and even sacrifice for their sake. In sum, the popular explanations of the causes of anti-semitism are based on partial or limited vision of this complex phenomenon. Moreover, most of these explanations derive from the assumption that modern anti-semitism is a recent development, and thus fail to stress sufficiently the need to see it in the context of prolonged and complex relations between Jews and non-

Jews — that is, in the context of a very long heritage of cultural variance and socio-religious conflicts.

The conclusion is, therefore, that an investigation of the causes of anti-semitism cannot be attempted without first discussing the hatred of Jews in terms of its historical development. As a point of departure, one must ask: When did the special adverse attitude to Jews first appear, and not merely as a conflict between tribes or nations but as a fundamental and conceptual denial of their worth? An attempt at answering this question brings us back to the Hellenistic Era when a widespread diaspora came about — either as a result of immigration or proselytism — and a monotheistic minority took its place among the nations as a fixed factor and, in the course of time, as a competitor. This religious conflict and competition, together with the difference in lifestyle, social and ethical values, created the basis for the rejection of the Jews. In order to justify this hostility, a search was undertaken in an attempt to prove the superiority of the polytheistic majority's convictions and social doctrines. The advent of Christianity as a monotheistic religion changed only the form of the competition, and the character of the conflict. As was already mentioned, it was not Christianity that determined the primary patterns of the fundamentally negative attitude towards the Jews in spite of the fact that from a theological point of view, the polemic against the Jews served as a vital basis for Christianity more so than for any other religion or culture.

In the struggle to increase its influence, Christianity began to exploit the hostility to Judaism that was already widespread in Greco-Roman society in order to: 1.) Fence itself off from Judaism in the eyes of the pagans (who generally viewed it as a Jewish sect), and 2.) To win support and popularity among the very extensive circles in which scorn or opposition to Judaism were already deeply-rooted. In the writings of several Church fathers — canonists as well as schismatics — the denial of the Jews' religious and cultural value became the central motive. They devoted much effort to locating defects in the Jewish people to the point that they portrayed them as the sum-total of all negative characteristics. With the spread of Christianity among the people of Europe the clergy became the bearers of religious, cultural, and ethical values of the entire people, and consolidators of an educational network. Thus the negative stereotype of the Jew crystallized in their writings and sermons, becoming the cultural property of medieval Europe. Moreover, because of their method of transmitting cultural assets which, was based on rote memorization and reliance on established authorities, this negative stereotype became embedded in Christian Europe's consciousness as well as a central image in its ideational and conceptual world, finding expression in theological writings, sermons, the

plastic arts, drama and ballads. In such a manner the negative stereotype penetrated geographical and cultural areas where there were no Jews to be found and no basis for real human relationships.

It is worth noting that, just as new features of the stereotype were added on in the time of the Church fathers — the Jews being portrayed as unscrupulous, as Deicides, and forsaken by God — so it was at the height of the Middle Ages when usury, black magic, and ties with the Devil were added on to the list. A worthwhile project would be to study the individual components of the stereotype as they change over the course of time. This is especially important for the transition from the Middle Ages to the Modern Era, that is, with respect to the changes that came about under the influence of cultural and religious transformations in sixteenth and seventeenth century Europe. Looking at the image of the Jew in theological and polemical literature, in sermons, plays, fiction, and the plastic arts, one realizes that certain features of the medieval image had been cast off. Nonetheless, the basic image remains the same, the only difference being that its characteristics were better adapted to the ideas of the Modern Era. As a matter of fact, the European — in particular the enlightened European, continued to bear the negative stereotype of the Jew in his consciousness and if certain features had become blurred over the course of time, others came to take their place.

It is clear that the persistence alone of the negative stereotype in European consciousness is not enough to explain Jew-hatred as an active social phenomenon in the Modern Era. We must also take into consideration an additional factor, that is, the justification and rationalization of this same negative image. Because of the intellectual and ethical change in values and the revolt against tradition which saw in man's reason the ultimate criterion in determining his relation to nature and society, the negative image found itself in need of moral and ideological justification, and explication if it was to persist. In the Hellenistic Era too, there were attempts to search for a justification of this attitude in the Jews' segregation, and isolation which marked them as *odium generis humani*. In the Middle Ages the crime of deicide, which bore eternal punishment, provided this justification against the enemies of Christianity. But it should be also taken into consideration that another prejudice played a role in this process, that is, the suspicion of Jews as potential traitors ever ready to deliver state secrets of the Christian nations to the Mongols, Arabs, or Turks.

In the Modern Era the accent has shifted to the "instinctive feeling of revulsion" i.e., to the feeling of aversion towards the alien Jew or to the social protest of the "exploited masses". Those who relied on historical studies

argued that over the course of European history, Jews were parasites exploiting their fellow man and living at his expense. This sort of argument began to appear towards the end of the 1870's in the German ecclesiastical press⁷ and in the 1880's as in Karl Buecher's study on Frankfurt.⁸ With That is to say, this time, a supposedly scientific justification and explanation shifted to the natural sciences, as if one could discern in anti-semitism the primal conflict between two elements, the Aryan and Semitic races. That is to say, this time, a supposedly scientific justification and explanation was found for the age-old negative image of the Jew.

An additional factor which explains the influence of Jew-hatred, one which converted it into an active force in modern anti-semitism, is the deliberate exploitation of the negative stereotype in the political arena to achieve political and social goals. This was made possible by the great transformation that took place in European society during the second half of the nineteenth century when the importance of ideological movements rose in the political arena. It is true that in the past, anti-semitic elements and the negative stereotype were exploited by the ruling class, the clergy, and the burghers to attain various political objectives: in the struggles that took place in the Middle Ages and beginning of the Modern Era between the Church and Crown, in the cities' struggle for freedom, and during the Reformation. However, this became a widely used weapon only in the Modern Era when a majority of European countries adopted democratic political practices thus giving considerable influence to political parties and their programs, and when the man in the street, in his quest for a supposedly rational ideology to guide his daily behaviour, was given the possibility of increasing his self-esteem through scorn and hatred for the Jew. It is worth noting that radicals were no exception, earning an honourable position among those who exploited the stereotype and the ideology which justified it. As in other ideological problems, a positive correlation exists between the intensity of anti-semitism and the degree of its exploiters' extremism — whether on the left or right.

In conclusion, let us say that in order to understand anti-semitism in all its aspects one must take three factors into consideration: 1.) Its historical roots and character as it develops over the course of time; 2.) The rationalization and justification of the existing negative image; 3.) Its deliberate

7. Cf. L. Erler, "Historische-kritische Uebersicht der national-oekonomischen und social-politischen Literatur," *Archiv fuer Katholisches Kirchenrecht*, Bde. 42-48, (1879-82).

8. Karl Buecher, *Die Bevoelkerung von Frankfurt am Main in 14 und 15 Jahrhundert*, Tuebingen, 1886, pp. 526-601.

exploitation for political and social purposes. Because of the nature of modern society, not only has the use of the stereotype not diminished, but in fact its exploitation is on the increase. With the growing influence of the mass-media, one cannot reasonably hope otherwise. It is only natural that contemporary man, exposed to an incessant stream of information with which he cannot possibly cope adequately, will attempt to bring order to this confusion by using stereotypes. In any case, the discussion of anti-semitism in terms of its historical development is essential if we are to understand this very significant phenomenon.

Immanuel 11 (Fall 1980)