SOCIALISM

OF

FOOLS
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CAPITALISM AND MODERN ANTI-SEMITISM

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This book focuses on a break that constituted a change of fundamental importance in the history of European cultures: the morphological transformation of the millenarian anti-Jewish Christian tradition, shaped between the fourth and fifth centuries, into a new anti-Semitism that grew from hostility to the legal emancipation of the Jews in the late eighteenth century. Emancipation was won in 1791 for the first time, following the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen in revolutionary France. After a few years, the anti-Semitic propaganda opposed emancipation by launching a frontal attack against the rights of citizenship and those who were considered responsible for it: the thinkers of the Enlightenment, above all, the writers of the German Aufklärung and the Jewish German Haskalah, together with their interlocutors, the philosophes and chrétiens éclairés, on the other side of the Rhine. The constitutional state and political emancipation eliminated the discrimination that for centuries had guaranteed the segregation of the Jewish communities from Christian societies of Europe. It also removed the control over the banking, commercial, and financial activities of the Jews that the monarchies had exploited to sustain their courts. So with the advent of the market society, the old stereotype of Jewish usury was transformed into an attack on what economists and sociologists later called “capitalism.” The anti-Semites identified the capitalists with the Jewish financiers and therefore made the latter the scapegoats for the crises of the modern industrial economy, caused, according to them, by financial speculation, that is, usury.
My hypothesis is that this anti-Semitic anticapitalist literature arose in the context of the intransigent Catholic reaction against the revolution in political rights, the free market, and secularization. For instance, in 1806 Viscount Louis de Bonald began the propaganda campaign against the Jews of the French Empire and the Kingdom of Italy, which soon led to grave limitations on the legal equality and citizenship rights of the Jews. This was the new paradigm that arose in those years: the old enemies of Christianity had become equal to all other citizens and in fact constituted a hostile power within the national Christian community; thanks to the democratic guarantees they had obtained, the Jews could now with impunity conspire to use their economic power to conquer political power. As a consequence, the fight against “Jewish” capitalism should have been directed against its main protectors, namely, liberal institutions and the constitutional state.

This paradigm spread in the early decades of the nineteenth century via intransigent Catholic texts and among the antiliberal “social” economists and the authors of the church’s social doctrine; then a Fourierist writer, Alphonse Toussenel, appropriated it around 1845. With the work of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, the paradigm circulated widely among the socialist associations of skilled and unskilled craftsmen and workers. Proudhon, an economist, was fully aware of the Christian social doctrine’s hostility to free market. In the last decades of the century, this paradigm reappeared anew in the texts of the Catholic and nationalist writer Édouard Drumont, in the proclamations of the Christian Social propagandists of the Habsburg Empire, and in the literature of the anti-Semitic German leagues and of some socialists of Lombardy and Veneto, Italy. The Protocols of the Elders of Zion was a late expression of this history. In the syndicalist and nationalist texts, and in particular in those of the Italian Paolo Orano (and also those of Maurice Barrès), the new anti-Semitic paradigm reappeared in its final version, the one that fueled the press campaign preceding the anti-Jewish legislation in Central Europe and Italy between 1933 and 1938.

The foregoing is a summary of this book. In studying the relevant texts and documents, the main difficulty was maintaining a detached stance in order to avoid errors of anachronism, such as interpreting the words of the authors and protagonists according to their meaning today. The risk of anachronism is highest in the case of the word “usury,” which played a decisive role in the representation of the Jews as enemies of society. This interpretative precaution led me to single out the texts, documents, and sources that contributed to the definition of the comprehensive ideology as “anti-Jewish and anticapitalist” (and
not simply “anti-Semitic”). I do not use the term “anti-Jewish anticapitalist paradigm” as a general concept but as the result of detailed and philological analysis of texts and the consequent attempt to arrive at a generalization and interpretation. The only way to deal with the great quantity of texts, documents, and sources of anti-Jewish literature and propaganda (sources often published but later forgotten) is a firsthand analysis of a limited series of them, identified by my specific question. For example, the text Bonald wrote in 1806 is where I began my reconstruction. Taking it as a starting point, I initiated a journey that enabled me to connect this text with the other documents I analyzed: a journey from west to east (and vice versa) and then from Northern to Southern Europe and a journey in time, from the end of the eighteenth to the middle of the twentieth century. I took the specific details of Bonald’s text as connecting points (Ansatzpunkte), that is, “the specific points—as Auerbach argued—that can provide the seeds for a detailed research program provided with a generalizing potential.” Bonald’s text constitutes the circumscribed concrete point of departure for identifying a specific variant in the larger steam of anti-Semitism. What I am presenting here, in other words, is an anti-Jewish paradigm constructed on arguments of hostility toward the new market economy and the expression of the reaction by a part of society to the market itself, by the identification of the power of the market with finance (and finance with the Jews). It is not possible to attain this generalizing potential through a monographic approach or focusing on the oeuvre of a single author, which can instead be used only as a starting point, a case study with a centrifugal radiation force. What seems to me important to underline is that that old anti-Jewish and anticapitalist paradigm was widespread, from the beginning of the nineteenth century up to World War II, both in scholarly material and as propaganda literature, in the texts of important politicians, theologians, and academics and in the articles of popular journalists, agitators, and propagandists. The paradigm had a wide circulation moving “downward” and simultaneously “upward” in the social and cultural scale, crossing very different ideological fields, such as intransigent Catholic literature, reactionary politics against the Enlightenment, socialist and revolutionary syndicalist movements, and nationalist fascist parties. This wide circulation can be explained in some cases by contacts and meetings among the authors and therefore by the reception of some texts in certain political circles and social movements. In other cases these contacts are impossible to verify, yet, also in these cases, the degree of conceptual and morphological correspondence between the texts is absolutely evident, as is the presence of identical rhetorical
structures and analogous arguments that mark the anti-Jewish, anticapitalist paradigm. In other words, the same structures are present in documents from different ideological fields and political families.

But using general concepts (for example, “social racism” or “left-wing anti-Semitism”) in order to classify the sources and define the rhetorical structures would not by itself lead to rigorous conclusions. Adorno and Horkheimer argued that while there was no longer any need for economic domination, the Jews had been marked out as the absolute object of domination “pure and simple”; for this reason, according to them, no economic or social interpretation of the hatred toward the Jews would be possible. Anti-Semitism is an attitude of hatred toward the process of assimilation and the mimetic behavior of the Jews and therefore a manifestation of the deep roots of that hatred in our civilization, which still remain obscure.2 I think that Adorno and Horkheimer were right about this last point but not the first one because some manifestations of anti-Semitism (for example, within the nineteenth-century European working-class movement) can sometimes also be explained in economic terms, as has been done by Silberner, Lichtheim, and Rojahn (the same type of explanation has recently been proposed by Pierre Birnbaum in relation to the anti-Semitism of French shopkeepers, craftsmen, and peasants).3 These interpreters link anti-Semitism with the economic hardship of some particular social groups facing the fluctuations of the market economy. Yet they propose concepts that are too general, such as “socialist anti-Semitism” or “social anti-Semitism,” by which they cannot explain, for instance, why anti-Semitism began declining among European socialists precisely after the affaire Dreyfus, even if the economic crises certainly did not disappear and the official position of the Socialist International toward democracy did not change much.4 The explanations for the explosions of social hatred toward the Jews that link these explosions with economic crises are sometimes useful but never sufficient. The main protagonists of the European anti-Semitic movements belonged to the new nationalist and “revolutionary” right-wing parties and movements, which have been studied by Zeev Sternhell,5 but these movements often used the arguments of the socialists Toussenel and Proudhon, taken up again at the end of the nineteenth century by certain leading figures of the working-class and socialist movement: in this case, the Right used the rhetoric of the Left. The followers of the “revolutionary right” were certainly proud to be anti-Enlightenment, but the hostility toward the Enlightenment was in those years common among very different ideological “families.”6 The counter-Enlightenment continued (in fact, it has expanded) even after the
World War II, in particular in the final decades of the twentieth century: I am thinking of the texts of the neoliberal economists who opposed excessive legislation on the part of the state and the construction of complex legal systems; it is not pure chance that these authors have been accused of representing today the new intransigent Right. Albert O. Hirschman, for instance, has shown that between 1789 and 1989 the reaction against the rights of citizenship, then universal suffrage, and finally the welfare state has persistently used the same rhetoric and the same arguments. Nor do these interpretative contributions help us to resolve our problem, namely explaining the foundation of anti-Jewish anticapitalism and the hostility to political emancipation based on the myth of an economic conspiracy. George L. Mosse wrote rightly that this myth arose within nineteenth-century “neo-Christian” conceptions (but he does not tell us precisely when and where it arose), but scholars often have described in much more general terms a certain “anti-Semitism” of the European anticapitalist left-wing groups without explaining it. Finally, in recent years, anti-Semitism has been defined as a “discursive practice” or a rhetoric that has always used the same categories, the same tropes and images, the same arguments, which could have been used by different actors—authors, groups, and movements that might belong just as easily to right- or left-wing European groups. “Right-wing” and “left-wing” groupings are categories that arose at the beginning of the nineteenth century in the French parliamentary political debate; they had nothing to do with social-class divisions or with the social position of the Jews. As Marcel Gauchet wrote, “Right” and “Left” have belonged to the parlance of the protagonists of parliamentary history since the nineteenth century and therefore cannot be used as interpretative categories and transferred into scientific language. In my view, they have no historical significance, and it would make no sense to talk about an anti-Semitism of the “Left” as if it constituted a single and unique historical subject, always identical to itself since the beginning of the nineteenth century. It is highly inaccurate to use the same category (“the Left”) for defining very different political entities, such as, for instance, the 1830 republicans, the socialists of the Second International, and the communist parties of the second half of the twentieth century (some of them very critical of the state of Israel).

I can now return to the problem of the interpretative definition. I remember Pierre Vidal-Naquet with affection. On various occasions I listened to his lectures; I have read his texts and had an unforgettable meeting with him. Vidal-Naquet was the first scholar to use the formula “anti-Jewish anticapitalism” in order to describe the manifestations of hatred toward the Jews,
identified with modern finance. I think the formula is correct. It enables us to resolve the problem of the gap between the resilience of words and their shifting meanings in the course of time. Only the use of rigorous terminology can help a historian tackle the intrinsic weakness of historiography. The crucial problem facing a comparative history of the hatred toward the Jews is therefore not only underlining all the differences among the manifestations of that hatred but also proposing words and definitions that are different from the actors’ words and categories. The historian’s point of view is that of a scholar who examines societies, cultures, or languages in a comparative perspective; since the input comes from the present time, anachronism is inevitably the main problem. Historians try to achieve a reconstruction of a given society or a culture of the past or the specific language of an age, and their task is to remove any historical arbitrariness in interpreting texts. This self-vigilance is paramount in order to understand the meaning that the word “usury” had in the nineteenth-century documents that I use in this book: it no longer designated the traditional activities of money lending, but acquired (as early as the third decade of the nineteenth century) the meaning of banking activities and financial speculation. I have tried to establish the connections between, and the transformations of, the language Bonald used in 1806 (the accusation against the new Jewish usury, “la nouvelle usure juive”); that of Toussenel in 1845 (the identification of the Jew as a banker and a merchant “juif comme banquier et marchand”); and that of the authors who define themselves as “anti-Semitic” in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. I maintain that Bonald’s 1806 text, while still using the language of the anti-Judaic Christian tradition (and, therefore, the word “usury”), launches a novel attack, one against legal emancipation, which, as the accusation went, would have enabled the Jews to play a very dangerous social function in a context of new political freedoms. Bonald’s 1806 text contains already the bases for the identification of the Jews with bankers, merchants, and capitalists because it concocts already the nucleus of a new “anti-Jewish anticapitalism.” Hence, the category “anti-Jewish anticapitalism” is based on the analysis of the language of those texts, their period, and their context, but it does not reproduce that language.

I have to provide an analogous consideration of the word “anti-Semite.” The actors of the movements hostile to the Jews probably began to define themselves as anti-Semites after the publication of an 1879 book by the German journalist Wilhelm Marr, which I will analyze in chapter 1. The populist Maurice Barrès, the socialist August Chirac, the Catholic nationalist Edouard
Drumont, and the revolutionary syndicalist Paolo Orano, different as they were, defined themselves as anti-Semites, but their self-definition cannot be endorsed by a historian without some critical specification. The risk of using the word “anti-Semite” as it appears in documents and texts that are associated with hostility and hatred toward the Jews consists in echoing a term used in the sources that may conceal many different meanings. In this book, I have thus tried to propose a precise meaning of this kind of hatred. Carlo Ginzburg has observed that the linguist and anthropologist Kenneth Pike defined the perspective and language of the social actors studied in their context as an “emic” (from “phonemic”) terminology: “anti-Semitism” belongs to this perspective because it is a term by which the protagonists defined themselves. On the other hand, the definition of “anti-Jewish anticapitalism” is not in the sources but belongs to a rigorous analytical language; it belongs to the perspective that Pike defined as “etic” (from “phonetic”). The latter is the only perspective that enables us to escape the language of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the self-definition of the protagonists; it allows us to reconsider on different bases the long and sinuous history of the cultures that led to Auschwitz.  

Historical interpretation places itself on the level of scientific language, detached from that of its sources, but it cannot confine itself completely to linguistic investigation. It has also to consider the specific culture of the protagonists. Historiography is based on a dialectic between the language of the observer (the scholar) and the perspective of the observed (the actors). Hence, the study of people in their own time cannot disregard the emic level, which has to be included in the interpretation. A methodological clarification can help explain the title of this book, which undoubtedly mirrors the language of the protagonists, in this case the enemies of the anti-Semites: the formula, which at the end of the nineteenth century defined anti-Semitism as the “socialism of imbeciles” (or rather “of the imbecile”) was actually used by a leading German socialist, August Bebel, when he was interviewed in 1894 by Hermann Bahr: “der Sozialismus der dummen Kerls.” Bebel had probably taken it from Ferdinand Kronewetter, an Austrian member of the parliament who opposed, as a democratic position, the Christian-Social anti-Semite Karl Lueger, Adolf Hitler’s political mentor.  

The “socialism of the imbecile” appears to be only one of the diverse social (that is to say, cultural) reactions against the catastrophic impact of the birth of the market economy: the reaction that identified the cause of that catastrophe with the emancipation of the European Jews. As Hannah Arendt noted, that reaction aimed at guaranteeing the permanence of the ancien régime. The French
texts that presented this reaction were also important sources for the fabrication of a false document about the anti-Jewish conspiracy, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, by Russian journalists and secret agents. Regarding this text, Michel Bounan has formulated the hypothesis that the *Protocols* were “the police forgery of a revolutionary tumult.” This presupposes precisely the definition, proposed by Bebel, of anti-Semitism as the “socialism of fools,” but, at the same time, “it goes much further” as Ginzburg writes. For Bounan, the forgery of a revolutionary project conceals a real conspiracy, namely, the plan of the modern powers to control the whole of social life and political institutions by manipulating even the opposition to power, by neutralizing the role of the controlling institutions of the state administration, by making politics opaque, by reducing the effect of every expression of public opinion.21 The French prehistory of the *Protocols* and the genealogy of the “socialism of the imbecile” enable us to really “go further,” but in a different sense from the one understood by Bounan. In a study like mine, which strives to remain as detached as possible from the emic perspective, or the mental horizon of the protagonists of those times, the philological methodology is central. This methodology is not concerned with literary writings but especially and mainly with economic and political writings from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries, and historiography remains the most important guide to containing the temptation of introducing “hypostatized, abstract concepts.”22 The choice of Bebel’s phrase in the title of this book means that, despite the urgency of looking for a scientific interpretation, my essay deals with contingent, historical truths at their basic level.

In the history of the cultural roots of the persecution of the European Jews, the issue of the historical truth has much broader implications than in any other historical topic. The history of the “socialism of the imbecile” (or “of the imbeciles”) did not end at Auschwitz. It did not end in 1945; the manifestations of the anti-Semites have continued in Europe in the following decades and have even intensified in the last twenty years. The mechanisms of falsification also did not stop in after the 1930s, the time of the greatest success of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*; they continue today to act through the manipulation of memory and the denial of historical truth. Historiographical negationism—the denial of established historical fact—is the new anti-Semitic literature of the post-Auschwitz historical period. This new model of falsification can only be defeated by historiography, namely, the search for the truth: by revealing the history of the persecution and integrating it in the history of totalitarian Europe.23 For this reason, it is absolutely necessary to start
from an awareness of what anti-Jewish propaganda, the falsification of documents, the denial of rights, and the persecution and extermination of the European Jews have meant: the collapse of ethics within European civilization. At the moment when principles collapsed within the old European civilization, ethical codes and norms, which had been considered indestructible, could be altered “without too many problems,” as Hannah Arendt wrote. It is crucial to realize that the collapse of the morality of the old world of “civilized” Europe has continued after 1945: the mechanisms and procedures of falsification wreak irreparable harm even today. Historiographically groundless, negationism represents a terrible threat not only for the most important twentieth-century historiographic and legal achievements (i.e., Nuremberg’s verdicts) but also for moral truth: as the “paradigm of extreme injustice,” the genocide of the Jewish people represents a moral truth threatened directly by negationism and indirectly (and thus more insidiously) by neo-skeptical culture. Old anti-Jewish propaganda and newly fabricated false documents that deny the persecution of the European Jews are different forms of the same deception. The texts of nineteenth-century literature and anti-Semitic propaganda that offered a false representation of the Jews provides the materials for a forgery that claims to prove an event that had never occurred: the Jewish conspiracy. But the myth that that false document succeeded in creating was not unreal: despite being a product of falsification, the myth functioned like a real event that produced historical effects that were just as real. In March 1943, Alexandre Koyré wrote that the creators of totalitarian propaganda, from the time of the first publication of Mein Kampf, always announced their program of action publicly, knowing that public opinion would never take seriously their persecutory and destructive declarations. Koyré’s hypothesis seems to me to be enlightening in the case of the propaganda and the falsifications of the anti-Semites. Anti-Semitic propaganda states a fact that never happened and falsifies the evidence that would demolish it, yet it tells the truth about its own persecutory intentions because its authors were certain that they were able to deceive public opinion and even those who did not believe it: non servatur fides infidelibus. Therefore, the lie about the Jewish conspiracy concealed a real “conspiracy in broad daylight,” wrote Koyré, hatched by the anti-Semitic and totalitarian movements, an authentic plot which had to gain “the trust of the masses” that, for this reason, could not hide: “The conspiracy in broad daylight, if it was not a secret society, was nevertheless a society with a secret.” In such a society, distinguishing between the truth and falsehood, thus holding the power of judgment and decision
making, was exclusively reserved to a very restricted elite, at the level of both social movements and the political regime. The propaganda of the anti-Semitic movements and the totalitarian regimes was, in this sense, “conspiracies in broad daylight” knowingly based on falsification. The elite knew both the art of the effective lie (in order to manipulate the psychology of the masses) and the art of revealing the truth of their plan of persecution. Contemporary negationists do the same things and invent even more new myths with the aim of demolishing the acquisition of historical knowledge by stratagems and rhetorical devices that are not unlike those of the propagandists and forgers who preceded them: reductivism, relativization, manipulation, interpolation, negation. Reductivism and manipulation and denying the truth of proven and confirmed facts, were characteristic of prewar anti-Jewish propaganda and falsification; now they are practiced by those who deny the truth of the persecution and extermination. At the same time, negationist rhetoric has inherited from anti-Semitic propaganda the same mania of explaining everything: for Hitler’s national socialism onward, the contrast between Christian Aryan Europe and Judaism represented the fulcrum of the history of the world and constituted the justification “for the function of salvation” of the Nazis’ mission; for the negationist ideologues and the aberrant heirs of the ideological drifts of anti-Jewish anticapitalism, all the social systems of the twentieth century have been variants of a single imperialist plot. 27

The concentration camp was the instrument used by the Nazis to exercise their power, but according to the negationists, it was not qualitatively different from other forms of imperialist exploitation. In order to support this thesis, the negationists falsify and eliminate the facts that would make their claim a lie; they even overturn the relationship between reality and unreality. Their procedure does not consist therefore in fabricating false evidence or false documents but rather stating the reality of what has never happened (or in declaring that what really happened is not true). Hence, to the negationists, history is never real. On the one hand, they state something that has never been historically true, namely, that the Nazi system was only a variant of imperialism; on the other hand, the assertion that Auschwitz constitutes a “lie” enables them to overturn a historically proven truth into a phantom. 28

Propaganda, falsification, and negation all have in common the violation of the method of rigorous verification of the facts. Essentially, they eliminate the very notion of reality. They abolish logical verification or evidence as the means by which a thesis is verified. But the starting point to arrive at a historical truth must remain the reality of the facts, weighed up with definite evi-
Evidence: propaganda and falsification, which ignore or distort the reality of verified facts, are typical procedures of the violation of the principle of reality and, therefore, of the possibility of pursuing the truth. Justice—however one defines it—also cannot ignore the rational procedures of ascertaining the facts through evidence: therefore, it also presupposes correct procedures. The justness of the procedures constitutes the precondition for just decisions (for example, in a trial), and the procedures have to be in harmony with the spirit that informs the highest principles of the judicial system. Indeed, the aim of a criminal lawsuit, like that of historiographical research, consists in the ideal of the search for the truth. The procedures and rules that the law defines are correctly applied to the case in question only when they are found to be fully appropriate to the case, the law is correctly interpreted, and, finally, the facts are verified: the category of truth, understood as a statement corresponding with the fully verified facts, is therefore immanent in the correct procedural application and in the concept of justice as in the concept of history. To seek and write historical truth also means to continue to render justice. The information-technology revolution has made possible the globalization of communications but has also increased the risks of confusion between reality and unreality. The deniers of historical reality, who try to eliminate the difference between the truth and lies, want to ensure the retrospective victory of those who were defeated militarily and politically in 1945: the anti-Semites. Today, the strategy is not that of repressing or stifling the truth as in the despotic regimes wiped out in 1945, but of making it unrecognizable and indistinguishable from falsehood. In the negation of the principle of reality, “Hitler survives, and no one can say with certainty whether he is dead or he saved himself.”
On the morning of August 1, 1944, at about ten o’clock, a squad of German soldiers commanded by an officer broke into the large house of Giuseppe Pardo Roques, in Pisa. The elderly Pardo had been a businessman, a notable citizen, and the president of the Jewish community of Pisa. Searching for the presumed reserves of money and the valuables of the Jews of the city and for what the fascists of the neighborhood described as “Pardo’s gold,” the German soldiers looted the house and killed all those who were present, Jews and non-Jews.

In the semideserted city, bombed and divided into two occupation zones by the German Wehrmacht and the American army along the front line defined by the River Arno, Giuseppe Pardo Roques, who had been a generous benefactor of the whole city and universally respected (even by the Republican Fascist authorities) was massacred, together with about ten unfortunate people: his collaborators, his guests (fleeing Jews), and Christian friends.

There were few people in that quarter of the city, once bustling with men and women in activities and trade, to mourn the incident: the Jews, rich or poor, had left everything to escape deportation; the others had been driven toward the countryside and the Pisan hills by Allied bombs and the grip of famine. The few surviving inhabitants were terrified.

Up to the mid-1930s, however, the presence of Jews in the entrepreneurial, commercial, administrative, and academic elite of the city had been substantial in relation to the small community. This also explains why, until there was free political discussion and a possible development of industrial disputes, there had been sporadic eruptions of social anti-Semitism and even some anti-employer demonstrations in the labor movement.¹
On that August 1 morning, the German soldiers were probably looking for “the treasure of Pardo Roques.” While the silent and hidden inhabitants of the street watched the arrival of the soldiers, the officer who asked “is the Palestine capitalist here?” was told by a tutor, a Republican Fascist, pointing at Pardo’s house, “The Jews are there.”

The episode of the massacre in which Pardo Roques died is not so different from thousands of others that occurred throughout Europe: it is anything but “an isolated case.” However, a valuable clue can be gleaned from the officer’s question: he defined Pardo Roques as a “capitalist,” in accordance with National Socialist and (as we will see) Republican Fascist propaganda. Does this mean that the rounding up and the robbery were planned as an act of requisitioning and expropriation? It seems certain, in any case, that the Fascist Republicans who were cooperating with the German soldiers belonged to the lower classes and that some of them were suspected of harboring a personal resentment also based on social envy.

**EMANCIPATION AND USURY:**

“SUR LES JUIFS” BY LOUIS DE BONALD (1806)

A tragedy from among the many that accompanied the extermination of European Jews sets us on a journey that will be long and anything but linear. The European fascists of the period between the two World Wars wanted to “unite the nation” and also represent the true socialism: it would have been “everyone’s socialism” and not of a single class, the socialism of the nation, National Socialism. In its name, for example, the Nazis had created, through a decree of the minister of agriculture, Darré, small inalienable farms, in order to consolidate the class of the farmers; nevertheless, such policies never went so far as to make serious inroads in the power of the social elites and the employers: they attempted rather to control them, subjecting them to the strategic indications of the Economic General Council. In their turn, German workers were forced to join the Labour Front organized by Dr. Ley, but the integration of the working class did not succeed completely, bringing to the surface labor tensions and conflicts between 1938 and 1939, which perhaps influenced the preparations for the war.

Regarding the professed socialism of the fascists throughout Europe, the French Jewish historian Élie Halévy formulated, while the events were unfolding, a judgment that we can today consider definitive. He observed that, on the part of the National Socialists,
there was no demand, as there was instead from the socialists, for the suppression of profit inasmuch as it was a principle of the capitalist economy, but only for the suppression of interest, considered a way of exploiting farmers, workers, and craftsmen (but also industrialists) by the capitalist banking system. It was only against this particular form of capitalism that National Socialist propaganda was unleashed since there were many Jewish bank directors, while the lower middle class, ruined by the crisis, felt crushed, on the one hand, by the Jewish bankers and, on the other hand, by the proletarian socialists and communists, many of whose leaders were Jewish. The chronic anti-Semitism of the German lower middle class thus became one of the articles of the Hitlerian creed.⁴

Halévy insists on a paradoxical aspect of the European crisis that had begun with the Great War: its repercussions had rekindled the social tensions that had emerged in the cycle of events following the Russian Revolution of 1905 and the big working-class strikes in Western Europe in 1905–1906 and 1910–1911, even if the attempted revolutions in Hungary, Bavaria, northern Germany, and northern Italy in the immediate postwar period had been defeated.

In Soviet Russia “socialist anarchy” had been disciplined with the military system of the wartime economy, imposed from 1918 to 1921, and then reinforced with integral planning, in 1928. In Central Europe, instead, it was precisely fascism, a direct imitation of the Russian methods of government, that opposed “socialist anarchy.” But fascism thus found itself induced to set up under the name of “corporativism” a sort of counter-socialism that we are more inclined to take seriously than is generally the case among antifascists. In fact, corporativism consists of an increasing nationalization of the economy with the collaboration of particular elements of the working class. Hence, the internal contradiction that afflicts society can be defined as follows: the conservative parties demand the infinite strengthening of the state but the reduction of its economic functions; the socialist parties demand instead the unlimited extension of the state’s economic functions and at the same time the weakening of its authority. Through a social and ideological compromise, the solution would be “national socialism.”⁵

As early as the last decades of the nineteenth century, some important German anti-Semitic organizations, such as the Agrarian Party, the Anti-Semitic League, and the Evangelical Christian Social Party, like the Austrian Social Christians, had been set up to defend the interests of farmers and the middle class by proposing a protectionist economic policy and a paternalistic social
policy, passed off as authentic socialism or, as the Bismarckian propagandists claimed, *Reichsozialismus*. But this type of anticapitalism often expressed itself as anti-Semitism. The culture of the right-wing European parties constituted the next stage of an old war against the rights of man and the citizen, of the hostility, resistance, and opposition that, throughout the nineteenth century, had shown themselves to be against the emancipation of the Jews after the French Revolution and the granting of civil and political rights in various European states. The hatred toward the Jews had increased like the tumoral growth of the political war against the Enlightenment and the principles of citizenship, but it was reinforced by the strong popular resentment against the supposed social power of the Jewish elites, in any case identified with capitalism and the classes that had benefited from the introduction of the free market.

The investigation of the economic and social dimension of the opposition to Jewish emancipation forces us, in my view, to modify considerably the most lucid interpretation of modern anti-Semitism, that proposed by Hannah Arendt. Jaspers’s student placed anti-Semitism among the determining components of the totalitarian movement, together with the “continental” forms of imperialist policies and the nationalisms that had developed in Central and Eastern Europe at the end of the nineteenth century, when the pan-Germans and the pan-Slavists unleashed furious campaigns of aggression against the Jews, accusing them “of having infiltrated the European nations with the aim of gaining control of them.” My hypothesis is that, first of all, the genesis of modern political and social anti-Semitism should be antedated. Its first manifestations occurred as early as the beginning of the nineteenth century and should be viewed in the context of the revolt against the political Enlightenment and the rights of citizenship, as Arendt also proposes. The full import of this hypothesis would, however, be lost if one were to omit an analysis of the economic and social content of the heated debate about emancipation, that is, the attack against the role acquired in modern society by the Jewish elites (and by the Jews in general), seen as “exploiters of the nation” by the sections of the population most traumatized by the effects of the commercial society and the industrial take-off.

It is also necessary to rethink the link between the genesis of political anti-Semitism and the anti-Jewish Christian tradition. According to Araldo Momigliano,

Whatever may be written about the age that ends with Fascists and Nazis cooperating in sending millions of Jews to concentration camps (my
mother and my father were also among the victims), there is a judgment that should be repeated: this terrifying massacre would never have happened if in Italy, France, and Germany (not to mention other countries) if many people had not been indifferent (an indifference that had built up over the centuries) to the destiny of their Jewish compatriots.7

The destruction of the European Jews irreparably severed that European civilization that Momigliano considered the historical result of the trilingual collegium made up of the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin intellectual products formed in the Hellenistic Age.8

Therefore, the Shoah has to be considered the tragic outcome, even though not “necessary,” of course, and not preestablished, not only of modern political anti-Semitism, but also of a much longer anti-Jewish tradition, which can be traced back to at least the fourth century AD, when Christianity had already defined itself as *Verus Israel* (the true Israel) and had transformed itself into the new religious “ideology” of the Roman Empire. Then, for the first time, the enemy of the church was represented as the old Chosen People,9 and all the sufferings inflicted on the “perfidious” Jews because they were unbelievers in the true God—the Diaspora and the second and definitive destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem—became perfectly explicable and justified, as Eusebius of Caesarea wrote, because of the old “crime committed against Christ.”10 Christianity had become the church exclusively of the Gentiles and had presented itself as a community incompatible with “the synagogue.” Hence, the accusation against the Jews was formulated that would be repeatedly proposed through the centuries: that of being—as John Chrysostom wrote—“greedy people, traffickers, merchants, and traitors of the poor, who live in synagogues, the dens of thieves.”11 Chrysostom, Jerome, Ambrose, and other church fathers of the fourth century thus repeated the intransigent condemnation already defined in the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 23:20–21), according to which usury, taken to mean a loan with interest, would only be considered legitimate if exercised toward strangers, toward those, that is, who did not belong to the People of Israel: “You will not lend on interest to your brother, neither money, nor food, nor anything that could earn interest. You can lend on interest to a foreigner, but not to your brother, so that the Lord thy God may bless you in whatever you do, in the country to which you are going and which you will occupy.”12

Thomas Aquinas solemnly confirmed that usury always and in any case is a sin because everyone is obliged to recognize, in any person, Jew or Gentile, his own brother.13 And in 1199, on this theological premise, Pope Innocent III,
while prohibiting, under pain of excommunication, the persecution of the Jews, abuses against their property, and their forced baptism, reasserted that “Jewish perfidy” constituted the confirmation of the truth of the Christian faith and condemned the activities of money lending and banking practiced by the Jews.\textsuperscript{14} Nevertheless, starting from the tenth century, these activities began to be developed above all in German and Italian cities, in which the financial and credit resources managed by the Jewish bankers had become necessary for financing commercial transactions.\textsuperscript{15} This commitment to banking and lending activities had been, as is well known, the effect of legal restrictions: a ban on owning land, for example, had been imposed on the Jews at the end of the Middle Ages (in Italy in the sixteenth century). But the separation from landed property and real estate had already happened many centuries earlier, when (again in the fourth century) the Jews had been prohibited from having Christian servants. The money-lending activities were nevertheless partially tolerated at least until the end of the fifteenth century, when the Franciscans launched their new violent campaign. They urged Pope Leo X to legalize pawnbroking, and the attack on usury and money lending was also reposed by the most radical reformed preachers (at first also by Martin Luther).\textsuperscript{16}

The accusation of ritual murder was thoroughly defined and formulated for the first time perhaps by Thomas of Monmouth, a monk of Norwich Cathedral, between 1147 and 1150 (most probably independently of its Greek and Latin precedents); however, it crystallized into a paradigm after the episode of the child Simone of Trento (1475). It came to be used above all in the big campaign to establish pawnbroking and the closure of the Jewish loan banks. The propaganda of Andrea da Faenza, Giacomo della Marca, Alberto da Sarteano, and, above all, Bernardino da Feltre would have succeeded in effecting the expulsion of the Jews from quite a few Italian cities (including Perugia, where in fact a family of Jewish bankers was put on trial for attempted ritual murder).\textsuperscript{17}

The link between usury and ritual murder was corroborated in the same period in the Iberian peninsula, in the episode of the expulsion of the Jews of Zaragoza and other places. After a long period of decline throughout Europe, it reappeared more than three centuries later, especially in the Russian Empire and in Central Europe, where it was spurred on by the tragic trial of the Jews of Damascus in 1840.

This age of the new anti-Jewish literature began with the publication of Das Judentum und die Kritik, by Friedrich Wilhelm Ghillany, in 1841, and contin-
ued at least until 1869, the year in which Gougenot des Mousseaux’s pamphlet, *Le juif, le judaïsme et la judaïsation des peuples chrétiens*—also well received by Pius IX—was published. Finally, it returned with the successful *Der Talmud Jude*, by August Rohling, and, above all, in the campaign launched by *La Civiltà Cattolica* in the summer of 1881. The latter can be considered a real *nihil obstat* of the Holy See to the Catholic hierarchies’ plan to exploit the new political and social anti-Semitism that had appeared in various states. 18

What was the relationship between the anti-Jewish Christian tradition, tied to the controversy about usury, and modern social anti-Semitism, born from the rift which occurred after 1789?

The analyses that link anti-Semitism to objective and circumstantial causes, such as an economic crisis, unemployment, and psychological and material uncertainties, certainly grasp the context in which the phenomenon appears, but they conceal a dimension and a way of functioning of anti-Semitism that follows different rhythms and registers: certainly, they conceal the fact that *anti-Semitism is a tradition*—it is handed down like a tradition—it has the fluctuating but persistent course of a tradition, that is, an anthropological-cultural factor that characterized Christian and post-Christian Europe. One of its areas of persuasion and development is to be found precisely in the widespread need for tradition, refounding, and roots in the face of change and different influences. 19

In this passage, Stefano Levi della Torre puts forward a hypothesis that deserves to be discussed and taken up again. According to della Torre, anti-Semitism is an ancient tradition that has been revived, through the ages, in different forms. In fact, the particular character of the anti-Jewish tradition can be defined if one bears in mind precisely its centuries-old dimension and its constant features. Among these, the controversy about usury and lucrative money lending was one of the most important and, at the same time, an argument that, after the emancipation of the eighteenth century, was profoundly modified. My hypothesis is that the traditional proscription against usury, because of the definitive crisis of the ancien régime, generated the language of modern anti-Jewish anticapitalism, prepared for and fueled by the economic transformation of the nineteenth century and by the establishment of the self-regulated market, in which it renewed itself. The reaction to the market would have generated a widespread need for cultural roots to counter the uncertainty caused by the rapid change, and this background would explain why
the intransient Catholic reaction to the rights of man and to economic individualism was the seedbed of modern political and social anti-Semitism.

In the early nineteenth century, after the French Revolution and the political emancipation of the Jews, the political defense of tradition was crucial in the language of the counter-Enlightenment and in intransient Catholic thought throughout Europe. Some seminal examples are the works of Joseph de Maistre, Louis de Bonald, René de Chateaubriand, Félicité de Lamennais, Donoso Cortés, Ludwig von Haller, Father Taparelli d’Azeglio, and Father Ventura, just to cite some of the most famous writers. In these cases, the apostolic Roman Catholic religion was depicted and theorized as the only true religion—because it was the only one that could guarantee the stability of the social order on the basis of revelation and tradition, that is, of the church’s teaching accumulated over the centuries, starting from the teachings of the fathers of the church.

Religion is true because its authority has been demonstrated, but only the body of the church knows and preserves it as true religion. Tradition hands down the teaching that hierarchy is indispensable to the order of the church and of society, but it can, instead, be put at risk by the individual’s claim to have free access to the book, therefore the revealed truth. In other words, the so-called rights of man and of the citizen, based on the supposed intellectual and moral equality among men, would, in short, be the ultimate evil of three centuries of religious dissent and of the tragic division that occurred within the Christian church since the sixteenth century. The revolution of the rights of man and of the citizen would not be anything other than the final act of the Protestant Reformation and of the individual’s claim to read and freely interpret the sacred text.

But the heresy of modern man presupposes the obstinacy of the ancients, that is, the refusal of the Jews—as a stubborn people—to recognize the Son of God. Therefore, the apologia of the free market dates back to the old “Jewish craving for profit.” I will try to show how this same pattern passed from the social apologetics of the Catholic religion to different spheres of nineteenth-century culture, also penetrating antidemocratic and antiliberal socialism and permitting Alphonse Toussenel, a follower of Fourier, to conclude that behind Protestants there is always the power of the Jews (“derrière les protestants il y a toujours la puissance juive”). The transmission of the same line of reasoning from Catholic apologetics to socialist circles proves that at least part of the culture of the socialist working-class movement of the nineteenth century was permeated by the cultural reaction to the Enlightenment and
to what Hirschman has defined as the rhetoric of reaction to the rights of citizenship.\textsuperscript{22}

The role played by the Church of Rome and by the Catholic ecclesiastical press in the cultural war against civil and political rights and constitutional freedoms was officially sanctioned by the formal condemnation of the modern errors produced by the Enlightenment, codified with the \textit{Syllabus} in 1864 and by the First Vatican Council in 1870. By publicly and officially claiming such a role, the church revealed its political ambition of dominating and guiding all the positions rejecting the capitalist economic order and the constitutional state, in order to direct them to the Christian reconquest of European society. The decision of the Catholic Church to take up the theological and political leadership of all the movements opposed to reason and constitutional freedoms can explain why the fundamental protagonists of the nineteenth-century anti-Jewish movements were the guilds, trade unions, and Catholic associations. At the same time, the attraction exercised in some socialist circles by the Catholic social economy and by the church's social doctrine could also be traced back (though not exclusively) to the transmission of the arguments of the anti-Jewish tradition against usury. When, toward the end of the century, the nationalists tried to wrest the leadership of the anti-Semitic movements from the Catholics, the stereotypes of the Christian anti-Jewish tradition underwent a further transformation. Hence, the Jews were accused—in the nationalist press—of constituting a foreign “nation” that had infiltrated the European nations, but invisibly because it was formed by emancipated and integrated individuals who were apparently similar to Christians. Indifferent to the Christian law of brotherhood, they were more powerful because of their riches. From the end of the eighteenth century, the arguments of the tradition against usury therefore underwent a radical change in the controversy against emancipation; then, in subsequent decades, they passed into the sphere of non-Marxist socialism, some corporative fringes of trade unionism, and finally the realm of the nationalists.\textsuperscript{23}

So in anti-Jewish Catholic propaganda, emancipation was presented as the political instrument by means of which the Jews had finally succeeded in disguising their speculative activities at the expense of the Christian nation, and, since the acquisition of civil rights, it became the paradigm of modern political democracy, transforming the hostility toward the economic consequences of emancipation into hatred for democratic principles and institutions.

From the time of the first law of emancipation, promulgated in France in 1791, anti-Jewish rhetoric therefore identified the freedoms won by the Jews
with the advent of the liberal and constitutional state, attributing to them the full responsibility for the consequences and degenerative processes of modern democracy: secularization, selfish individualism, political disorder, and unregulated competition in the free market. In fact, the Jews were considered truly responsible for the advent of the democracy imposed by the Revolution and were thought to have plotted to disrupt the unity of Christians, to destroy the *societas christiana*, to dissolve the link between absolute monarchical power and the authority of the Church of Rome. Even though they were integrated in the *demos* through the laws of civil and political equality, the Jews had remained foreigners because of their stubborn refusal to recognize the true religion and give up their own perverse customs.

The unrecognizableness of the Jewish “difference” had already constituted a serious problem for the doctrinarians of theology and law in the preceding centuries. This debate can be traced back to the fifteenth century, at the time of the forced conversion of the Jews of the Iberian peninsula. Soon after the expulsion of the nonconverted Jews from Spain, in 1492, the problem had arisen of ensuring that no converted Jew or his descendants could attain important positions or even carry out some functions in the institution of the Inquisition. With the aim of “recognizing” the ancient Jews, a solution was found and was codified in subsequent decades in the statutes *de limpieza de sangre*, which, for the first time, had defined and classified who was Jewish on the basis of descent and of “qualities,” or characteristics, that the theologians considered immutable. Theologians and jurists, such as Escobar del Corro e Marquardo de Susannis, had indeed defined the Jews a *generatio*, which was characterized by *pravorum morum ratio* and in which all the *macula* of deicide would have been transmitted from father to son, through *qualitates sanguinis*.25

Centuries later, when anti-Semitism came to power in Germany in 1933, Leo Spitzer wrote an essay fundamental to an understanding of the anti-Jewish tradition. Starting from the correlation between a religious difference and an ethnic difference established in those seventeenth-century Spanish documents, he traced the etymology of the words “*rasse,” “race,” and “razza*” back to the term “*generatio*” used by theologians in the statutes of *limpieza de sangre*.26 In the same period, Victor Klemperer, who had been expelled from the Academy of Dresden as an *artfremde* Jew and was forced to go into hiding in his own country in order to avoid certain death, began studying Nazi propaganda and discovered that the “language of the Third Reich” represented a total regression to the rhetoric of the intolerance of the seventeenth century.27
So, my question is: was there an analogous semantic mechanism at work in the arguments against usury? At various times theologians had written that the sin of usury, like the guilt of deicide, would have been transmitted like a macula and inherited. Once again, there had been the attempt to correlate religious difference with a difference in blood. The sense of any distinction between religious and racial intolerance had therefore already been lost before Count Gobineau formulated it in the most arrogant way: “All peoples immutably conserve character and ideas: the Jews, the Persians, the Copts, and in some way also the Armenians: races that the system itself characterizes with the mark of avidity and baseness.” And significantly, among the permanent characteristics of the “Jewish nature,” Gobineau had included that avidity revealed precisely by the sin of usury, that is by a lucrative loan.

But the new feeling of hatred toward the Jews that was taking shape after the emancipation cannot be considered the explosion of hostility toward a different and recognizable “race”: it was rather the expression of a new hatred toward their own fellow citizens, who were supposed acting against their fellow men in the same way they had already threatened Christianity in the past, in the ages when they had carried out the function of tax collectors for the sovereign and money lenders to the state. The stubborn persistence of the Jews in refusing the gospel and the claim of still being the Chosen People therefore represented the definitive proof of an insurmountable extraneousness, and the latter constituted, in turn, the indispensable prerequisite for a conspiracy aiming at conquering economic power. So the imaginary economic plot hatched to gain control of the European States would have become, in the nineteenth century, the plausible explanation for the cyclical crises, financial crashes, and bank failures, until the Protocols of the Elders of Zion claimed to provide the final proof of the Jewish conspiracy. This false document of the alleged meeting that would have been held during the first Zionist Congress in Basle in 1897, to organize the economic and financial conquest of the world, was the false text of a bogus plot. But it was also the obvious indication of another political plot that was actually true: the conspiracy of the most aggressive anti-Semitism that had projected, on to the supposed Jewish financial imperialism, its own designs of expansion and dominion.

In clashing with emancipation and the constitutional State, anti-Semitism became indebted to the anti-Jewish Christian tradition. Not by chance, the term “anti-Semitism” began to spread in European political parlance after the publication, in 1879, of the political propaganda text written by the German (previously democratic) journalist Wilhelm Marr. Precisely in the attempt to
find a way of defining the Jews that was not solely based on religion, Marr insisted on their parasitic social function.31

At the beginning of the century, the Napoleonic conquests had extended to Europe the regulations of the Civil Code but, in the age of the Restoration, the laws of emancipation and the egalitarian regulations had been revoked. Legal emancipation was definitively attained only in the second half of the nineteenth century in various European states: in the Habsburg Empire in 1867, in Prussia in 1869, in the unified Reich in 1870. In Italy, in 1848, civil equality had been ratified in the Kingdom of Sardinia, in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, and in other states, but it was revoked after the defeat of the liberal movements and finally restored only after Italian national unification.32 Nevertheless, emancipation did not affect the majority of European Jews, confined in the settlement district of the Russian Empire, between Poland, Lithuania, Byelorussia, and Ukraine, where the cruelest forms of exclusion and discrimination persisted and were in fact aggravated by the periodic manifestations of intolerance fomented by the Orthodox clergy and the tsarist police, as happened after the assassination of Tsar Alexander II.

In Central Europe the reaction against emancipation also grew more intense in the last part of the nineteenth century. In the region of Lower Austria, the socialist Karl Lueger succeeded in gaining the support of the Christian Socialist political movement, thanks to which he was elected burgomaster of Vienna, in 1897, by exploiting the discontent provoked by the economic hardships of large social strata struck by the depression that had begun twenty years earlier and had culminated in the crash of the Vienna Stock Exchange. The repercussions of that event had extended as far as Berlin and all over the German Reich, where farmers’ associations and the industrialists’ confederation had reacted to the economic crisis by supporting pan-German nationalist movements, which were fighting to revise the already limited constitutional system in a neo-absolutist direction.33 The recurring anti-Jewish campaigns, promoted by the Anti-Semitic League, the Christian-Social Party, the Social Party of the Reich, the German Popular Association, the Anti-Semitic Association, and the Conservative Party, were supported by a broad social alignment and often also by academics: for instance, Paul de Lagarde, an eminent scholar of Eastern civilizations, turned the University of Göttingen into a center for the dissemination of anti-Jewish publications, thereby exerting a profound influence on German teachers. Between 1873 and 1890, more than 500 works of anti-Jewish literature and propaganda were printed.34
Nevertheless, the most conspicuous anti-Jewish movement developed in a totally different institutional context, the French Republic, founded on the secular school and universal suffrage, between the end of the nineteenth century and the Great War. In the last two decades of the nineteenth century, the effects of the economic depression also made themselves felt in France, where the political consequences of widespread corruption, like those that emerged in the so-called Wilson scandal, also exploded. This led to the resignation of a president of the republic, Jules Grévy, and, above all, discredited the democratic institutions and parliament. Also in France, the collapse of a major Catholic bank, the Union Générale, resulted in a propaganda campaign against the alleged excessive power of Jewish finance (which was supposed to have caused the collapse). The denunciation of the alleged Jewish “conspiracy” created a climate—hostile to the parliamentary system—in which plans developed for the constitutional revision of an authoritarian system, culminating in General Boulanger’s venture between 1888 and 1889. The pamphlets of the Ligue Antisémitique of Morès and Guérin enjoyed an enormous success at that time, and many disturbances and riots against the Jews broke out again in the early 1890s in Montpellier, Tours, Toulouse, Angers, Lille, Grenoble, and Marseille.

A broader anti-Jewish front formed because of the Dreyfus Affair. The officer accused of spying for Germany became the symbol of treachery, betrayal, and the Jewish conspiracy behind the back of the nation: Captain Dreyfus was depicted as “the Jew,” that is, the foreigner who had betrayed the country that had taken him in and had placed its trust in him. He therefore came to symbolize the failure of legal emancipation and, on the contrary, provided new evidence of the old truth and validity of the traditional Christian prejudice. In the alleged conspiracy in favor of the Reich, Catholic newspapers—such as *La Croix, La Bonne Presse, Le Pèlerin, Les Études*, and others—found confirmation of the reasons for their old hostility to emancipation, therefore to the principles of democratic citizenship and the Republic.35 Together with the congregations, orders, and secondary associations of the church, the clerical newspapers led the anti-Dreyfus front, made up of Catholics, conservatives, nationalists, and anti-Semitic socialists, claiming the primacy of the church in rejecting “modern errors.” The theological primacy in the long battle against the Enlightenment would have legitimized, in their view, the Catholic ambition of relaunching the commitment to the Christianization of European society and controlling the new movements opposed to democracy, of which
anti-Semitism was a decisive component, and thus the anti-Jewish controversy became the defining characteristic of the Christian parties that were forming at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, and took on a determining role in the conflict between the church and the secular state. The final consequence was that of definitively transforming the Jews into the symbol of secularization, the radical rights of freedom, and modern moral decadence.

The phenomenon of the assimilation of the Jewish bourgeoisie and the simultaneous increase of the flow of immigration of Eastern Jews transformed the Jewish communities of Western Europe—especially those of Germany, France, and the Habsburg Empire—into scapegoats for the social malaise. However, the conditions for the success of anti-Semitic propaganda among large segments of the population of those countries were “prepared for” by tradition—the familiarity that believers had with the patterns of thought, arguments, and stereotypes that centuries of Christian anti-Jewish preaching had deposited in the collective memory.

In the controversy and the anti-Jewish political battle there even arose a climate of “rivalry” between the Catholic parties and the Protestant movements. In 1881, for example, the periodical La Civiltà Cattolica did not criticize the campaign of anti-Semitic agitation promoted in Germany by a court preacher in Berlin, the evangelical pastor Stöcker, but, on the contrary, the periodical hoped that Catholics would be able to win control of that movement by virtue of the primacy exercised by the Church of Rome in the centuries-old polemic against the Jews. In fact, the church had been the first to denounce the extension of rights of citizenship to the Jews, arguing that this would destroy the rules that for centuries had separated the Jews from Christian society and “prevented them from doing any harm.” Unfortunately, according to the periodical, this had actually happened, confirming that the reasons for the separation between Christians and Jews had not changed through the centuries and that it was, therefore, necessary to change the procedures and the degree of intensity but not the principle of the separation—as the Jesuits and the Assumptionists maintained. This could translate into legal discrimination going as far as totally preventing Jews from participating in society. As the Assumptionist Fathers stated in their own newspaper, La Croix, on November 6, 1894: “To admit the Jews in Christian society is like declaring that the deicide, of which they carry the perpetual curse, is no longer of concern to our generation. But if we are Christians, they remain cursed.”
It should be borne in mind that organs like *La Croix*, the *Historisch-Politische Blätter*, and *La Civiltà Cattolica* were certainly not marginal publications in the Catholic European press; on the contrary, they often dictated, to the ecclesiastical authorities, the approach to be adopted. Moreover, even the Apostolic Nuncio in Vienna, Cardinal Serafino Vannutelli, recognized the necessity of vigorously supporting the popular reaction to the domination of the free-market economy by the Jewish elites; in introducing the discussion of the Congregation of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs on the situation in Austria and on the Christian Social movement, Cardinal Vannutelli (who was also the patron of the French Assumptionists) recognized that in Vienna, “over many decades, the Jews and with them the German Liberal Party were dominant. Everything is in their hands: wealth, capital, large factories, newspapers and representation in the town hall, in the provincial diet and the Parliament of the Empire.”

Therefore the church could not do otherwise than raise “the economic issue” and the “oppression of capitalism to the detriment of the people and small industry” because, in any case, the scandal represented by Jewish domination required entering the social field and mobilizing the peoples oppressed by the new *usura vorax*, as it had been denounced in *Rerum Novarum*.

We therefore have to ask ourselves what happened in the nineteenth century to the image of the Jew as a usurer. What happened to that stereotype constructed over the centuries by the traditional intransigent polemic against lending at interest and trade, when legal emancipation and secularization were intertwined with the “artificial” imposition of the free and self-regulating market—to use the term adopted by Karl Polanyi—that is, with the political decision to build self-regulated free markets?

I will concentrate essentially on the French society of the last decades of the eighteenth century. In France the free market in wheat was introduced simultaneously with the phenomenon that Marc Bloch called “agrarian individualism,” when the attack on “vaine pâture” (pasturage) and the private appropriation of common lands increased and deepened the conflict between the aristocracy of the landowners, the *laboureur* owners and the agricultural workers paid by the day: the *journaliers*. As well as the revolts and flour wars (*les guerres des farines*) against the repeated attempts, between 1763 and 1775, to liberalize the price of grains, there were also the attempts to restore the old forms of consumer protection of the lower classes through the *taxation populaire*. This was done in the name of a “fair price,” defined according to
the codes of the moral economy of the working classes. In the same period, the protests of magistrates (rémontrances des parlèments) against the liberalization decrees were strengthened and legitimized by the fierce campaign of intransigent theologians “against the monstrous hydra which the church had already struck several times with its lightning.” Minister Turgot was the author of the market-liberalization decrees, and in line with his firm adherence to physiocratic doctrines, he found himself deployed on the opposite side to the intransigent front in the new controversy over Deuteronomy, against the repeated statements about the irreconcilability of the church, trade, and lending at interest. This clash among the Catholic hierarchy, the new middle classes, and physiocratic culture did not, however, prevent a number of important religious authorities from speaking in favor of “liberal” options, as did the Abbé Baudeau, the editor of Les Nouvelles Éphémérides. He embraced, with conviction, those physiocratic theses that could also easily be accused of being an apologia for the interests of the “bourgeoisie” devoted exclusively to profit (“an aim” that, in the controversy, often had no possibility of being distinguished from “usury” and “robbery”).

In fact, these formulas can be traced back to seventeenth- and eighteenth-century traditional moralistic literature, in which the so-called bourgeois had been identified with the usurer who lends money and goods for the sole purpose of gaining an unlawful interest, higher than the margin warranted by the value of the goods and the money invested. The very metaphor of the “monstrous hydra”—with a thousand heads, always regenerating themselves, and gaping jaws to devour the flesh of Christians—used for centuries against the “vile practice of Jewish moneylenders,” favored and encouraged the identification of the new “bourgeois” usurers with the Jews.

I will conclude that the emancipation of 1791 created what Pierre Vidal-Naquet defined as “the juridical, linguistic, and national chasm,” which would have divided the Jews of Western Europe from those of Central and Eastern Europe, and furthermore that emancipation also made the categories of the polemic against usury relevant as additional reasons for attacking the rights of citizenship granted to the Jews. At the same time, the continued existence of the community structures of the Jewish “nation” were seen as clashing with the aspiration of Jewish citizens to integrate in the new nation they were living in.

The phenomena of the rejection of juridical equality and, therefore, also the proposals of immediately applying some restrictions to the new laws of emancipation, can be considered, in the first place, the consequence of the
clash between the church and a legislation that it regarded as the most evil result of the Enlightenment. Furthermore, the hostility to the functions exercised by the Jews in economic enterprises was still being fueled by this traditional anti-Jewish heritage. And if the nationalization of Jewish minorities created the new Jewish consciousness it also increased the uncompromising reaction against it.

The link between Jewish emancipation and the economic exploitation of the “Christian nation” by Jewish bankers and moneylenders, laid down in the texts of the propagandists of the Catholic counter-Enlightenment, also provided the determining contribution to the formation of a new anti-Jewish paradigm. From the eighteenth century, the end of the discrimination, applied until then to religious minorities, had different effects in the various European states. The change in the condition of Jews took place in different ways over a very long period and, in some cases, as in many German states, emancipation came after a period of social and cultural integration favored—as Mosse has written—by the identification of the Jewish elites with the ideal of the Bildung.

Therefore, in a long-term perspective, emancipation emerged as a contradictory phenomenon and varied by time and method since the achievement of legal equality eliminated discrimination but also some “privileges” enjoyed by Jews in the ancien régime. For example, there were communities that had gained free trade and commerce in some major port cities in Europe and enjoyed great prestige among the courts of the German principalities, duchies, and small kingdoms. Furthermore, legal equality did not always eliminate the old forms of discrimination or pressure from the church for conversion and the practice of forced baptism. On the Jewish side, it sometimes fueled, as a reaction to disappointment, a feeling of nostalgia for the status quo ante: in the Jewish consciousness, there was sometimes the risk of a clash between the old and the new identities, as happened to those who wanted to reconcile love of country and loyalty to Judaism as the first and irreplaceable ethical monotheism.

Having identified emancipation as the last result of the Enlightenment and its translation in the principle of universal citizenship, the new anti-Semitism could not but draw sustenance from the rhetoric of the reaction against political universalism and religious, moral, and economic individualism. This fusion of the counter-Enlightenment and hatred of the Jews explains why the counter-Enlightenment arguments against the rights of citizenship often echoed the old theses of the anti-Protestant reaction to the Reformation, and
the same reaction also continued to fuel the postrevolutionary controversies against the decrees of the abolition of the guilds, the corporations, and regulatory market protection. Thus were laid the premises of a vicious circulation of arguments and rhetorical devices between the anti-Jewish counter-Enlightenment and the antiliberal moral economy.

Louis de Bonald, for example, one of the most eminent theoreticians of the anti-universalistic and anti-Enlightenment reaction, was also the author of one of the first texts of the explicit dispute against the social role of Jewish merchants and, more generally, the social position of Jews after emancipation. Bonald was the author, during his years abroad as an “émigré” escaping from the Revolution (but also after participation in the Revolution in its early stage), of one of the first treatises of the neo-absolutist political reaction, *Théorie du pouvoir politique et religieux*. It was written in 1796 to challenge the foundations of revolutionary constitutionalism and update the basic theological-political ideas of Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet in a violently anti-Rousseauian key. Bonald also published, on his return to France, one of the most violent anti-Jewish articles of the postrevolutionary period: “Sur les juifs.” This is, to my knowledge, the first text in which the argument against democracy and the equality of rights is intertwined with an explicit anti-Jewish anticapitalism, which would be inherited by social Catholic writers and by some socialist polemicists.

From a political-theory point of view, Bonald was certainly not an original author. In fact, his anti-individualistic monarchical and communitarian tendencies seem to be, fundamentally, a revival of the old absolutist theses of some well-known authors of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: Bossuet, Filmer, and Ramsay. His most important feature is not therefore his political neo-absolutism but the reformulation of what Marc Bloch defined, in *La société féodale*, as the official ideology of the ancien régime. In every society, wrote Bonald, there are some constant and regular recurring “functions” that serve to regulate social relations. They include the function of command (which he defines as *pouvoir*); the function of the transmission of political orders and moral values (a function carried out by a government or ecclesiastical *ministre*); and, finally, the function of the person who obeys and works (the subject, the *sujet*): every institution, from the family to the state, appears to be governed by such social functions. The *Théorie du pouvoir politique et religieux* therefore reproduces the apologia of the three orders of the Kingdom of France and the functional tripartite model of the official ideology of the ancien régime. This had been redefined in the sev-
entheenth century by the jurist Charles Loyseau in a work entitled *Traité des ordres et de simples dignitez*.

Rousseau was Bonald’s bête noire because, with his democratic utopia, the Genevan writer had criticized the idea that legitimate sovereign power was based on the archetype of paternal authority, defining it a thesis that favored a “single part” of society, and tracing it back to the pro-absolutist authors, from whom Bonald had drawn inspiration: Filmer and Ramsay. Responding, in turn, to Rousseau, Bonald argued that the only sovereign power was precisely that of the “shepherd” father, based on the “necessary relations arising from the nature of things.” In fact, from the correspondence between paternal and political power Bonald deduced that the principle on which society is founded is not a contract agreed upon by individuals but the traditional principle of command. Rousseau had attacked Ramsay, Bossuet, and Filmer, but Bonald defended their doctrines of the natural and paternal origin of sovereign power, in particular the thesis expounded by Filmer in *Patriarcha, or the Natural Power of Kings* and reproposed by Ramsay, in 1719, in *Essai philosophique sur le gouvernement civil*.

Bossuet had probably started his most important political work—*Politique tirée des propres paroles de l’Écriture Sainte*—before the publication of Filmer’s book, but he advocated the same thesis, namely, that the sovereign power of the king is the only natural power because it is of patriarchal origin and is the only one that can avoid the establishment of political equality. Paternal authority has therefore always provided the first idea of command and authority.

But in the early nineteenth century, Bonald was not the only one to return to Bossuet: as Françoise Mélonio has noted, in those years Bossuet “was everywhere,” and, for the counter-revolutionary writers, above all those who wanted to restore “natural politics” and remove any possibility of realizing individual autonomy, controversialist, anti-Protestant literature constituted an extraordinary reserve of arguments against rights and universalism. Victor Cousin also returned to Bossuet and Fénelon, defining them as the “philosophers of Supreme Reason” and of the hierarchy of skills, as well as Blaise Pascal, who in the seventieth century had explained how to distinguish between the realm of the sciences, in which it is legitimate to apply the method based on *raisonnement*, and the political sphere in which, instead, one has to respect the principle of authority.

Thus, the Pauline principle of the *omnis potestas a Deo* was, once again, utilized by the Catholic writers of the counter-Enlightenment. Determined
to fight against the new democracy, they could not but exclude any role of the people and asserted that “monarchical power had been directly conferred upon each king” through the courant d’amour that God sends to men. They regarded religion as the supreme good of nations and civil society (*bien des nations et de la société civile*), which sanctifies government as the power which is holy, inviolable, and ordered by God (*saint, inviolable, ordonné par Dieu*) and guarantees the continuity of tradition and the solidity of power. 59 Already proposed by Bossuet and then by Claude Fleury, in the *Histoire ecclésiastique*, 60 the paradigm of paternal power and religious unity was modified at the beginning of the nineteenth century by these intransigent Catholic writers, for whom the enemies of Christianity were the atheistic philosophers, the Jews, and the revolutionaries. If the enemy had changed his appearance, the defenders of the faith nevertheless had to be able to recognize him and fight him in the name of the *unité de la société religieuse*, a condition of the *unité de la société politique*. 61 Seeking the fundamental laws that regulate the existence of societies meant recognizing the signs of the action of Providence in history because laws are the “necessary relations that derive from the nature of the divine being and from the nature of man.” 62 The family is therefore the model of the natural society founded on the relationship among people animated by the general will and true love, and a society based on the family includes the property and financial resources that are necessary for the maintenance and preservation of its members. This is in keeping with the necessary relations among social beings, therefore in keeping with the “will of social beings and society, in accordance with the divine one.” 63

But in society, the “general will” is “embodied” in the monarch, just as within the family it is embodied in the father: so the monarch appears to be the father of society, whose laws therefore are necessary bonds for human beings organized in families and societies (“sont rapports nécessaires qui dérivent de la nature des êtres constitués en famille et en société”); public religion, exclusive power, and social functions together form the *constitution de la société civile*, produced by a political tradition that dates back to the synthesis of Roman law, Christian Revelation, and the Germanic tradition. 64

For centuries, this balance ensured the stability of the ancien régime, but, it collapsed when the individual (the *particulier*) appropriated the sovereignty conferred on him by the Constituent Assembly and when private interests and economic individualism prevailed over the criteria of public welfare and public virtue. 65 These were the errors of Mandeville, Smith, and also Rousseau. On this basis, the ferocious criticism of political universalism and the
attack on the free-market economy are undoubtedly the premises of Bonald’s contribution to the birth of the so-called Jewish question.

“Sur les juifs” is a text that, to my knowledge, has hitherto been ignored by scholars of modern anti-Semitism even if it is, in fact, first of all, a severe indictment of the *philosophes*. They are accused (apart from Voltaire) of always having favored the Jews and of having fashioned the intellectual weapons with which the jurists of the Constituent Assembly have promoted Jewish emancipation. The Jews, however—continues Bonald—have not, despite their emancipation, become authentic French citizens and sincere members of the national community. They have, instead, remained stubbornly faithful to their own law, as is demonstrated by the unjustifiable practice of usury, in order to pursue their own exclusive interest in observance of this ancient law and to cause the financial ruin of the peasantry, divide the rural and patriarchal family, and disrupt the traditional society. Bonald’s accusations reveal a total ideological opposition to the creation of a constitutional state, but, nevertheless, they also bring to light real hardship because, in 1806, thousands of small landowners in his home region, Alsace, risked losing their plots of land precisely because of the “exorbitant interest” that they had to pay to the “lenders” that, obviously were not mainly Jews. And the situation of the farmers, aggravated by the poor harvests of the following period, would have led to the enactment of Napoleon’s “infamous decree” containing the annulment of all debts. 66

For many reasons, “Sur les juifs” is a paradigmatic document of anti-Jewish anticapitalism and of a traditionalist defense of rural society from the free market, which was taken up again and reformulated throughout the century: as late as 1871, for example, the Catholic economist and, at the same time, Saint-Simonian sociologist Frédéric Le Play strengthened the attack on universal suffrage, political universalism, and democracy, with the ideal evocation of a social hierarchy based on families, corporations, and communities that derived from Bonald’s pamphlets.

As an apologist of the social economy, corporatism, and communities Bonald was therefore antithetical to Jeremy Bentham’s *Defence of Usury* but also from those positions that, within the Catholic world, were available to meet the needs of the modern economy (a case in point being the anonymous author of *Letters on Usury and Interest*, published in 1774, which envisioned the possibility of reconciling the “commercial spirit” with the principles of Catholicism). 67 Intransigent in the field of business ethics, Bonald also took up the defense of those traditional values inspired by old standards of
popular consumer protection that had animated the flour wars (guerres de farines) and popular taxation (taxations populaires), but his main objective was, however, to ask the Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte to convene a national gathering of Jewish leaders and persuade them to disavow usurious practices.68

The opening of “Sur les juifs” is peremptory. The fault of the philosophes is, above all, their indifference, going as far as contempt, toward the Christian tradition, which has led them to mock the church’s old suspicion of the Jews: “For some time now, the Jews have enjoyed the benevolence of the philosophes and the attention of governments. In these two emotions, there is a combination of philanthropy, indifference to any religion, and perhaps also a little of the old hatred toward Christianity.”69 Bonald also identified a more serious fault. The Enlightenment thinkers had even dared to propose “utility” (utilité) as the way of defining rational political decisions and had replaced the primacy of public ethics with private morality, going so far as to make individual welfare and selfishness the aim of government. The utilitarian philosophers had come to believe “that it would be much more important to improve the legal status of Jews, rather than altering their morality in order to improve them” and the precept of conversion had succumbed to the criterion of legal emancipation on the basis of the calculation of the economic utility proposed by Adam Smith in the Wealth of the Nations, the new bible of the philosophie économiste:

The Constituent Assembly, breaking all the barriers that religion and politics had raised between the Jews and Christians, also called upon the former to enjoy the benefits of the new Constitution, which the Assembly believed in good faith to grant to France, declaring them active citizens of the State: a title which, contemplated by the newly enacted Declaration of the Rights of Man, would be regarded as the highest degree of happiness, and honor to which a human being could aspire! Until then, the Jews in France had only enjoyed general privileges that governments guarantee to the people who enjoy free profession of faith and that were compatible with the customs and religion of a people always at open war with the religion and customs of other peoples.70

The passage bears witness to a feeling of nostalgia for the condition of separation and discrimination, hypocritically concealed by the reference to the privilege (faculté) in which the Jewish “nation” had lived until emancipation, but in it there is no reference to any documentary evidence that the Jews—an ob-
stinate people in their self-presumption, as well as being “stubborn people”—would have decided centuries earlier to go to war against other peoples.

According to Bonald, by granting Jews political participation, guaranteeing them military service, and giving them administrative positions, the Constituent Assembly had committed “the enormous mistake of knowingly putting laws in conflict with religion and customs,” but, sooner or later, the government would have to change its mind, as would “the friends of the blacks” who regretted “the haste with which they called for freedom for a people who had always been alien.” The comparison is significant. The Jews, by their “nature,” are a nation destined to remain alien to other peoples. This “foreignness” appears—this seems the sense of the reference to the noirs—to be an objective fact, permanent and “physical,” and for this reason analogous to the racial difference with the blacks. But, at the same time, the natural and permanent difference of the Jews cannot be detected by a physical diversity but only by their practices and rituals, a culture that testifies to their enduring ancient hostility toward Christians.

There is dramatic evidence of the foreignness and hostility of the Jews not only in Alsace but in the entire country, even if in that region—insists Bonald—a true social catastrophe was looming over nearly three-quarters of the population, threatened by the size of its debt. Here the moneylenders had become the “high and mighty lords of Alsace, a region in which they collect the tithe and seigneurial privileges, and certainly, then, if in the language of the Enlightenment philosophers, the term ‘feudal’ is synonymous with oppressive and odious, I know of nothing more feudal for a province than eleven million mortgages owed to the usurers.”

There is a key word in the text that deserves to be underlined: the provocative definition of Jewish commercial and financial activities as “feudal.” This appears to be an important discovery since the invention of the definition of Judaism as a “new feudalism” is commonly attributed instead to a text published thirty-nine years later by a follower of Fourier, the socialist Alphonse Toussenel: Les juifs, rois de l’époque. Histoire de la féodalité financière. Here, instead, we have evidence that Louis de Bonald used the term “féodalité” as early as 1806 to define the position and social function of the Jews.

If the Jews were able to disperse throughout the national territory while remaining united among themselves like those who act for the same cause, they would surely have put their wealth to good use in order to acquire great influence in the elections and then they would have used that
same influence to gain new riches. To date, more eager to get rich than to
gain power, they have only partially realized their plot, only using their
capital to acquire large companies.73

Bonald therefore envisages that the worst, namely, political domination by
the Jews, is yet to come. Because of their economic power, they would gradu-
ally acquire political influence, so far as to subdue the Christian nation and
thus become the ruling elite: a danger that explains, even if it does not justify,
the exasperated reaction by the people, sometimes leading to real massacres,
as happened in Algiers. Bonald therefore endorses all the new discriminatory
measures adopted in Europe in the early nineteenth century: for example,
those taken in Bavaria to prevent more than one marriage for every Jewish
family by imposing high taxes on marriage ceremonies. Indeed, the gravity of
the situation would justify more drastic measures.

The solution to the Jewish question would never come through only legis-
static, political steps, and, in fact, new measures would be necessary, such as
the imposition of identifying marks on the clothes of the enemy who had be-
come “invisible” because of emancipation. The identification mark (la marque
distinctive) would be fully justified by the need to identify those responsible
for behavior hostile to the bien public. The return to the past almost sounds
like a premonition of Hitler’s decrees.

The defeat of the antisocial Jewish activities could only be achieved
through the elimination of a “nation” of individuals who, like “a state within
a state will, through their rational and systematic conduct, eventually turn
the Christians into their slaves.”74 Therefore it would be necessary to counter
not only the legal philosophy of emancipation and political universalism but
also the error of those enlightened Catholics who, like the Abbé Grégoire,
had deluded themselves that the ensuring of citizenship rights to Jews would
overcome their obstinate separation, so far as to integrate them in Christian
Europe.

Those who, instead, recognize that the reason for the degradation of the
Jewish people and the hostility it has for all other peoples lies in their
religion, are well aware that its vices and misfortunes are the deserved
punishment for a great crime, the carrying out of an anathema. They also
think that the correction of those moral vices must precede any possible
change of legal status: which means, to put it clearly, that the Jews cannot
Bonald’s article is not just a document of the counter-offensive against the emancipation of the Napoleonic era, unleashed a few years after the attainment of legal equality, but concludes a longer path. This is demonstrated by the allusion to the precedent set by the protest pamphlets and petitions (remontrances) against the royal edict promulgated in 1787 in favor of the emancipation of non-Catholic French subjects; this referred, in effect, to the Protestants, who were a legal minority since the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

That measure had offered—according to Bonald—the legal premise of the subsequent regulations in favor of the Jews. Hence, the meaning of his allusion to the role played by Chrétien-Guillaume de Malesherbes in the preparation of the edict of 1787 is evident: in fact, two years later, Malesherbes was appointed president of the Constituent Assembly that would have enacted the statute for the emancipation of Jews. Once again, it was Malesherbes who convinced the Abbé Grégoire to vote in favor of emancipation, suggesting that the inclusion of the Jews in a legal measure that concerned the general reform of the état civil would favor their conversion. Therefore, eliminating every residual trace of their diversity would have canceled the tendency to antisocial practices, such as usury, and emancipation, abolishing every professional discrimination, would have removed every practice of money lending.

After the edict of 1787, in many regions—for example in the South of France, Lorraine, and Alsace—the Jews had also begun to enroll in the registers reserved for non-Catholic subjects, asking for the application of the rule apparently intended only for Protestants. In Nîmes, for example, the Jewish workers in the tailor shops claimed the right to enroll in the register of the corporative association of tailors, and the local authorities, despite the negative opinion of the local state officials, consented to the request. The parliament of Metz was the first magistracy in France to register the edict, despite the violent opposition of Catholics led by the Abbé François-Martin Thiebaud: one of its members, Louis Roederer, was also able to introduce the discussion of emancipation in the Constituent Assembly, to which he had been
elected as a delegate, and it was here that Prince Victor de Broglie, in the debate, proposed the abolition of Jewish communal institutions.\textsuperscript{80}

Despite the harsh reactions of the Catholic notables, Lorraine, Alsace, and the Midi were thus the first regions in which the Jews attained the full civil equality that, it was hoped, would foster their “regeneration.”\textsuperscript{81} Bonald’s text can be considered the outcome of the ten-year Alsatian episode, which had begun in the last years of the ancien régime, but, above all, one of the first manifestations of the reaction to emancipation as the traditional arguments, useful in discriminating against the Jews with the aim of converting them, gradually gave way to the controversy about political universalism. In fact, Bonald, in his critique of universalism and the utilitarian conception of politics, was the first to propose a new representation of the Jewish enemy as the exploiter of emancipation, but, at the same time, he added to that image the old hostility toward usury. Thus the new hatred was directed at a parasitic social caste, now favored by emancipation: a caste that, only a few years later in the path outlined by Bonald, would in fact be defined as “Jewish financial feudalism.” In other words, according to Bonald, the Jews had benefited from emancipation in order to become part of the state, but they had not abandoned their antisocial tendencies and in fact would have used their economic strength to conquer the state.

After “Sur les juifs,” Bonald wrote other socially controversial texts against utilitarianism and the incipient Industrial Revolution and in defense of the agrarian economy, the traditional social structure, and political control of the market and financial activities. Among these texts, mention should be made of “Sur l’économie politique,” “Sur le prêts à intérêt,” and \textit{De la famille agricole} (the latter was published in 1826).\textsuperscript{82} They were extremely popular pamphlets in the 1830s and 1840s and had a tremendous effect on Catholic social writers: Ozanam, De Gérando, Lamennais, Villeneuve-Bargemont, and many others. But they also found a considerable audience among the socialists and—as we shall soon see—above all, among the socialist Fourierists and Pierre-Joseph Proudhon. The Saint-Simonians also took up some of the arguments of Bonald’s anti-individualistic and anticapitalist polemic without, however, accepting its anti-Jewish implications: it was mainly Toussenel, among the socialist Fourierists, who expanded the criticism of the market economy to include an anticapitalism targeted exclusively at the French and European Jewish elite.

The historical phenomenon of the onset of a robust anticapitalist attitude, directed exclusively against Jewish financiers and entrepreneurs, primarily undermines the common historical representation of a unified socialist
political family. It therefore has important consequences for the study of the
genealogical links between the Enlightenment and socialism because it re-
veals that, from the beginning of the nineteenth century, various socialist as-
sociations had developed plans and utopias that were very different in their
economic proposals and political language, often clashing with one another:
so, the heirs of the rights of citizenship won in 1789 were opposed to the nos-
talgia for a corporatist and hierarchical society, which characterized other
sectors of socialism such as Catholic writers, social Christians, and conser-
vatives, while some anti-Enlightenment socialists shared the latter’s hostility
toward Jewish emancipation.

As Élie Halévy showed, as early as 1908, socialism was beset by an inter-
nal contradiction, being at the same time a project for the completion of the
revolution of the rights of citizenship in winning the right to work and also a
reaction against economic individualism and the political system that would
guarantee its implementation: some authoritarian and socialist organizations,
through Comte, Carlyle, and Rodbertus, “had reassessed the doctrine of the
Vicomte de Bonald.”

But the considerable potential of Halévy’s heuristic intuition has never
been properly exploited, particularly by the historiography of the labor and
socialist movements of the second half of the twentieth century, and this con-
sideration also applies to the problem of interest here, anti-Jewish anticapital-
ism. Even Georges Haupt, the historian who contributed the most, together
with Edward P. Thompson, to restoring scientific autonomy to research on
the movements and cultures of the labor movement as expressions of the mo-
rality and real-life experiences of workers, and not just of the organizational
structures, the elites, and their programs, was unable to deal with that issue.
Not even his sensitivity as an exiled Romanian Jew who had escaped the Ho-
locaust and as a dissident socialist who had fled from the Stalinist totalitarian
system, therefore as a socialist able to look at the socialist tradition through
a process of “estrangement,” allowed Haupt to address the problem of the
relationship between the catastrophic outcome of the experience of the in-
ternational socialist movement and the catastrophe of the European Jewish
diaspora.

The earliest Saint-Simonian socialism, even though it was authoritarian,
antipolitical, and hierarchical, was not at all anti-Semitic. Its last message was
if anything modeled precisely on Judeo-Christian messianism, and the gloss
of *Le nouveau Christianisme* seems very clearly to have this meaning, and
the same remark applies to all the variants of the so-called Saint-Simonian
religion, like the rationalist and Judeo-Christian synthesis of Jules Lecheva-
lier, the romantic vision of Prosper Enfantin, or the mystical exaltation of Emile Barrault.87

The contrast between the philo-Semitic position of the Saint-Simonians and the violent anti-Jewish hatred of Fourier therefore appears very striking. George Lichtheim, in an essay of 1968, focused primarily on Fourier, Leroux, and Proudhon. These authors, in the 1830s and the 1840s, set in motion an anticapitalist reaction directed mainly against banks and finance capital but also based on hatred of the Jews as the “ruin and leprosy of the body politic.” Consequently, these writers also attacked the decision made in 1791 to grant the rights of citizenship to the Jews.88 Lichteim, however, did not examine an important clue: the closeness of these themes to the contemporary social po-
lemic of the neotraditionalist approach formulated by Honoré de Balzac, who was opposed to the conquest of a determining role by Jewish bankers in the new oligarchy that would, according to him, have controlled the economic policy of the monarchy of July after 1830.89

The course followed by Leroux was actually more complex. Leroux was responsible for the transformation, in 1830, of the liberal periodical Le Globe into a socialist Saint-Simonian publication, and of other publishing enter-
prises, such as the Encyclopédie Nouvelle and the Revue Sociale: it was pre-
cisely in the latter that he decided to publish, in January 1846, a long essay, en-
titled Les juifs, rois de l’époque (the title was the same as the work by Toussenel that had appeared the year before). The text was an attempt to deepen the striking contrast between the ethical monotheistic Jewish religion, founded on the principle of the unity and universality of humanity, and the so-called economic nationalism, or particularism, of the Jews, “a nation of merchants and usurers” and the inventors of the banking system. (However, Leroux was also a serious scholar of Judaism and Semitic languages and—as a scholar— was often in conflict with Ernest Renan because he was hostile to the cultural hierarchy of the races drawn up by the historian of religions).90

In this company, Proudhon is a special case. A prisoner of a genuine men-
tal chaos and the confusion of ideas of the self-taught man, he wavered among a moral approach to social issues, antifeminine prejudices, and racial stereotypes (typical of those revealed around the cause of American blacks at the time of the American Civil War). This also led him to accept the stereotype of the parasitic economic conduct of the Jews, “entirely negative, entirely usurious.”91
Proudhon gives us the opportunity to examine the formation of the primitive nucleus of a popular artisan, laborer, and peasant anticapitalism that developed in French socialist literature at the time of the Orléanist monarchy: it was a nucleus based on the exclusive identification of economic power with financial capital as the driving force of the transformation of the national economy, still predominantly rural and with cottage industries, into a modern industrial economy exposed to commercial crises and underconsumption, as well as the exclusive representation of that financial capital as a “Jewish bank.” In fact, it was the Protestant upper class, supported by the presence of Guizot in the government, which played a dominant role in Louis Philippe's economic policy.

But in what remains his most perceptive study of anti-Semitism in socialist literature, Lichteim correctly identifies the first nucleus of this representation—before Proudhon—in the first edition of Alphonse Toussenel's pamphlet *Les juifs, rois de l'époque*, published in 1845 by the Librairie Phalanstérienne, with the approval of the Fourierist weekly publications *La Phalange* and *La Démocratie Pacifique*. What Lichteim did not understand (and the hypothesis I am suggesting) is that Toussenel's text, a real milestone of anti-Semitic socialism, was highly indebted to the social apologetics of the Catholic religion and—perhaps—Bonald's text, written thirty-nine years earlier because “Sur les juifs” is the first text—to my knowledge—in which the ancient polemic against usury was redefined and placed in a modern setting to make it the basis of a criticism of the self-regulating market and legal emancipation.

It is interesting, at this point, to consider Emma Cantimori Mezza monti's observation while commenting on the first paragraph (“Reactionary socialism and feudal socialism”) of section 3 (“Socialist and Communist Literature”) of the *Communist Manifesto*. She recalls that, as a genuine subgenre of “reactionary socialism,” Marx precisely indicated the literature critical of the electoral reforms enacted in Great Britain between 1832 and 1835 (which permitted the new agricultural and urban middle classes to gain political dominance in the House of Commons) and the texts of the Catholic reaction to the French constitutional-monarchy governments whose first prime ministers had been two important bankers, Laffitte and Périer. The criticism by the Catholics had been expressed, Cantimori writes, “from the point of view of the landed aristocracy, nostalgic for the past.” But she identified the doctrinarians of reactionary and medieval socialism, above all, in Benjamin Disraeli, mentioned as the author of the novel *Sybil; or, The Two
Nations; Thomas Carlyle; as well as Heinrich Heine in Deutschland. Ein Winternärchen, published in 1844.93 For the subsequent years, she also cited the supporter of Napoleon III’s Caesarism, Auguste Romieu, Count Solaro della Margarita, “a reactionary minister of Carlo Alberto,” and the important economic theoretician Alban de Villeneuve-Bargemont. The latter had already been mentioned by Marx in Misère de la philosophie as an authentic source of “providentialistic economy” in the style of Proudhon.94 This may constitute a true connecting point among Proudhon, Villeneuve-Bargemont, and Louis de Bonald. Indeed, Bargemont’s Économie politique chrétienne leads one back to the essay Sur la mendicité, by Louis de Bonald, a true paradigm of what (after the 1872 edition of the Manifesto) was defined by Marx as “sacred” or “Christian” socialism, and a text written within the same propaganda campaign unleashed against the Jews.

The polemics on the liberal political economy and the construction of a social community economy constituted, in short, the background of the attack on the alleged economic role of the Jews. The significance of this attack, however, cannot simply be explained by the reaction to economic crises such as those suffered by Alsatian farmers between 1806 and 1808 if, as I suppose, it provided a paradigm for Toussenel’s polemic.

Toussenel’s Les juifs, rois de l’époque, which was also harshly polemical against liberal policies, was initially challenged by other members of the École Sociaitare and followers of Fourier, but this did not prevent the author from continuing to work with the Démocratie Pacifique, Victor Considerant’s newspaper. Toussenel remained a socialist and a member of the Fourierist group. He sided with Louis Blanc in February 1848 and supported the workers’ demands at the Labour Commission at the Palais du Luxemburg in June.95 His membership in the socialist working-class movement cannot therefore be doubted, but his representation of the social crisis was no different from that offered by the intransigent traditionalist Catholics and the social economists hostile to the self-regulating market. With an analysis perfectly identical to that of Louis de Bonald, Toussenel in fact indicts individualistic economic ethics, attributes its authorship to the Protestants, and highlights its alleged Jewish roots: “Derrière les Protestants, il ya toujours la puissance juive.”96

Furthermore, Toussenel also repeats de Bonald’s indictment of the philosophes. The Enlightenment thinkers are guilty of having started “the campaign in favour of the Jews” and of having adopted a utilitarian view of politics. Toussenel even goes so far as to hazard an offensive definition of the utilitarian “economics” of Bentham, Hutcheson, and Smith as an apologia for the
nouvelle usure. In the first part of the book, he also presents the supposed evidence of the “conspiracy” that would have prompted the Orléanist government to take the measures that had created the conditions for the establishment of authentic Jewish monopolies in the banking system, the press, and the strategic sector of rail transport. Unable to raise the monetary resources necessary to complete the construction of the railways, the government, in exchange for the advance of capital needed to finance the enterprise, would have granted a sole agency for the railway network of the north to the Rothschild group: namely, the management of, and the guarantee of profits from, the operation of the network. The financial mechanism behind the concession following the advance of capital would have represented—according to Toussenel—the subtle system through which “the Jews” had begun to take possession of national resources and to constitute a financial feudalism. In other words, they would have been in a position of absolute privilege in the country’s economy and of strategic control of the communications system, and, from those positions, the Jews would also have easily taken over control of the police force and military power. 97

The identification of capitalism with the Jewish elite can also be found in some passages of Fourier’s main work, Le nouveau monde industriel et sociétaire, but Toussenel’s text goes further and can be considered the first proposal of a socialized economy based on the expropriation of wealth and the redistribution of the capital of Jewish families. Toussenel, in fact, does not propose the abolition of capitalist ownership of the means of production and other forms of private property, but he anticipates the idea of anti-Jewish discriminatory legislation on a proportional basis. This foreshadows those rules of separation and discrimination that would be advanced from the end of the nineteenth century by the most radical and extremist anti-Semites, such as the socialist deputy and racist Georges Vacher de Lapouge in 1896. 98 Édouard Drumont considered Toussenel his “inspired precursor.” 99

In the document of the “socialist” Toussenel we can also find the stereotypes of the anti-Jewish Christian tradition: for example, the accusation that the Jews were the people responsible for “deicide.” But traces of this accusation still do not diminish the centrality of the economic and social message or the attack on the operations conducted by James de Rothschild, which were considered the last links of a chain of financial sabotage of the national economy. In that fatal sequence, an important place was occupied by the alleged conspiracy of the Jewish suppliers of the Grande Armée, which had caused irreparable damage to the Russian expedition of Emperor Napoleon
Bonaparte: an explanation, in terms of conspiracy and sabotage, that anticipated the one that would be adopted by the German Right to explain the collapse of the home front in World War I.

Following the overthrow of imperial-national power in 1814, the Jewish financial feudalism (féodalité financière) would have started its ascent to the powers of the country, ensuring the control and ownership of the most important companies, the monopoly of naval and land transport, and the banking “privilege,” thanks to the support of liberal and Saint-Simonian propaganda. Toussenel branded the liberals and Saint-Simonian “fellow” socialists as the valets des juifs and of banking capitalism, while the juiverie (“Jewry”) was by then identified with the elites of financial capitalism. Projecting on to the juif (singular in the text) the ancient ghost of the trafficking and money-lending usurer, Toussenel in fact makes it the symbol of every economic enemy of the national community and of the workers and, even more explicitly—in another text entitled L’esprit des bêtes, published in 1859—of the allegory of human and animal “rapacity.” Against the juiverie, namely the “rapacity of the capitalists,” it is necessary to reconsider and overturn the policy that had led to emancipation and retrieve Bonapartism as a model of the new industrial despotism. All the legislation through which citizenship and equal rights had been granted had to be demolished.

The return of the figures of the anti-Jewish tradition certainly cannot be considered an exclusive aspect of the French reaction to economic individualism. In March 1848, in the capital of the Habsburg Empire in revolt, liberal writers and democratic student groups that had demanded a constitution were attacked by the corporative associations of artisans and workers, more worried about issues of employment, livelihood, the rental costs of accommodation, and premises for their business activities than political freedoms. Hence the Gesellschaft der Volks, the Demokratische Verein, and other associations of artisans, manual workers, porters, and employees at the river port unleashed a violent campaign against the liberals, students, capitalist enterprises, and all those thought to favor the constitution and the free market. At the same time, they ascribed to the Jews the hidden direction of the democratic movement for reforms and the constitution.

Pamphlets, poems, broadsheets, and workers’ songs echoed the old arguments against usury, accusing the Jews of wanting to introduce the factory system in the territories of the empire and exacerbating collective passions. For example, in Bratislava and in the small Hungarian town of Raab, violent anti-Semitic agitations ended in actual pogroms. The sources also indicate
the presence of the symbols and figures of traditional prejudice, adapted to a
new situation marked by already modern social contrasts but represented in
the traditional form, as consequences of the dichotomy between the two na-
tions, “the Christian and German nation of work” and the “Jewish nation” of
usurers, moneylenders, and bankers. This image affirms the widespread the
reception of the texts of the earliest anti-Semitic German propagandists, such
as Wieder die Juden, written at the beginning of the century by the Prussian
chancellor Grattenauer and popular in German-speaking countries. 103

The problem of the presence of anti-Semitic attitudes in the popular asso-
ciations became more serious in the late nineteenth century. The social con-
sequences of the international economic depression, which had begun in the
mid 1870s, and the collapse of the Vienna Stock Exchange and then that of
Berlin in 1873, brought about the conditions for the intensification of anti-
Semitic propaganda and concentrated attacks on the families of the most im-
portant Jewish financiers, Lasker, Guttmann, Goldschmidt, and Rothschild.
Bolstered by this rising tide, the Viennese Social Christians increased their
support and brought about the victory of the representative of Lower Austria,
the deputy Karl Lueger, in the elections for mayor of Vienna. The artisans of
the capital (among whom anti-Semitic tendencies had radically manifested as
early as 1848) played a crucial role in the attainment of Lueger’s first success in
1895 and then—having overcome the emperor’s opposition to confirming his
appointment—definitively in 1897. Lueger then governed the capital until his
death. 104 In the territories of the empire, from the 1890s onward, the reaction
to the free market and the liberal system, which had begun about three decades
earlier with a full guarantee of the balance among the different nationalities
and the hegemony of the cultured German bourgeoisie, became violent. Fur-
thermore, the cosmopolitan political ideals, shared (albeit on different fronts)
by the liberal ruling class and the socialist and democratic opposition, were at-
tacked and weakened by the new antirationalist policy, promoted by the pan-
Germanic movement, the Social Christians, and the Czech nationalists.

The first anti-Semitic German electoral platform was presented by a pan-
German nationalist leader, Georg von Schönerer, at the elections of 1879, in
which he stood for the Verein der Deutschen Volkspartei and was elected.
In 1881 Schönerer presented a second manifesto “for national solidarity” and
protection from the exploitation “of the most valid forces of the people to the
advantage of the Jews.” 105 That manifesto was endorsed by the anti-Semitic
Society for the Defence of Manual Workers of Vienna, in the name of the
“war against the Jew, the bloodthirsty vampire . . . who bangs on the windows
of the houses inhabited by German farmers and craftsmen. Before Karl Lueger, it was perhaps Schönérer who chose to represent social categories such as the artisans and the shopkeepers hostile to the department stores and their Jewish owners, or the small consumers opposed to the immigration of Russian Jews driven out by the fierce pogroms. Leading a campaign for the nationalization of the the Nord Bahn railways, built years earlier with the support of the Österreichische Creditanstalt, which belonged to the Rothschilds, Schönérer adopted the same language as Toussenel, which was both anticapitalist and anti-Jewish. Thus, slowly, social anti-Semitism became the single most important pan-Germanic policy since it permitted a better representation of the enemy of the German nation: the Jews, an antinational and cosmopolitan people par excellence. Social anti-Semitism became the binding link between pan-Germanism, which the old national democratic Grand Germany (grossdeutsch) ideal had also adopted, and the new populism of the Social Christian movement of Karl Lueger, into which the old ideology of the Austrian Catholic political Right had flowed.

Karl Lueger, well before Hitler, was in fact the first anti-Semitic leader capable of organizing a genuine mass movement, which first captured the metropolis and then organized itself into a party to spread anti-Jewish anticapitalism in the country, too. This was possible because he had grown up in the democratic school of the supporters of universal suffrage but had also become an opponent of liberalism and the free market, in line with small taxpayers and the lower classes: in fact, as early as 1885 he presented himself as a democrat, a socialist, and a social representative of small taxpayers. For the same reason, he was enthusiastically supported by the Anti-Semitic Reformist Union, which endorsed his bill restricting the immigration of Jews and made anti-Semitism the platform that allowed Austrian Catholics to leave anachronistic conservatism and transform themselves into a modern mass movement of anti-Semitic, antiliberal, and anticapitalist workers. Lueger was rightly called the new wizard of mass politics, and it was to him that the French anti-Semites looked when the Dreyfus case revealed that the crisis of the liberal system affected not only the Habsburg Empire but also the Republic. Theodor Herzl, who at the time was the Paris correspondent of the Neue Freie Presse, declared himself horrified by the astounding convergence of Lueger, Schönérer, and Drumont.

Other abundant and substantial instances of social anti-Semitism are documented in numerous other regions of central Europe in these last years of the nineteenth century. In the province of Mantua, Italy, both the depres-
sion in the production of wheat and maize and the collapse of agricultural prices in the latter part of the century appear to have provided the most favorable context for the formation of a widespread anticapitalist anti-Semitism among farmers and in the leagues of socialist laborers of the Po Valley. In Mantua, the accumulation of tensions and conflicts between farmers, smallholders, and laborers, on the one hand, and owners, directors of large companies, bankers, and tax collectors, on the other hand (categories and social functions in which the financial and business Jewish elite of the city played a prominent role), sparked the explosion of social hostility against the Jewish population. This is documented by some sources of the socialist movement studied by Maurizio Bertolotti, such as the newspaper *La Favilla* and the writings of Luigi Colli, a prominent socialist leader who had also been a volunteer in Garibaldi’s campaigns. For the third time in the century, in the city of Mantua, “Jewish capitalists” were attacked as usurers, and accusations were repeated that had already been made during the 1842 riots and in the protests against the abolition of the Jewish prohibitions in 1848.  

All this does not call into question the most important and historically decisive fact, namely, that the position of Italian and European socialism became, precisely in those years, substantially favorable to legal and political equality. However, this may help to explain how, in the context of the crisis of European liberal systems and the radicalization of social conflicts at the end of the nineteenth century and in the first decade of the twentieth century), there were the most intense manifestations of anti-Jewish anticapitalism. (Between 1904 and 1908, in Italy, the project of the revolutionary syndicalists to change the strategy of the Socialist Party and to hold general strikes failed.) In the Italian context, it cannot simply be dismissed as just being a case of absorbing the French anti-Semitism that arose from the dialogue between socialist revolutionary syndicalists and anti-Semitic nationalists, or from the imitation of the Viennese Christian Social movement.  

Let us return to Alphonse Toussenel’s book. After having tried to reconcile Tacitus with Bossuet, the *Encyclopédie* with Fourier, Bonald’s attack against Jewish emancipation with the socialist criticism of “monopolies,” Toussenel ends his book with a series of political appeals addressed to ministers, the clergy, the king, the people, and, finally, *les socialistes*. All these appeals—except perhaps those to the clergy—remained unheeded. It was only in 1886 that a populist writer who had converted to Catholicism, Édouard Drumont, rescued Toussenel’s text from the oblivion into which it had fallen and paid a glowing posthumous tribute to his declaration of war on the Jews. Despite
the unexpected tribute to the forgotten socialist Fourierist, his book, *La France juive*, was, however, applauded above all by the conservatives, the clerics, and the Assumptionist Fathers, who defined it as the work of “un frère d’armes.”

Dumont had returned to the religion of his fathers around 1880, enlightened—so it seems—by spiritual conversations with the Jesuit father Stanislas du Lac de Fugères. Like Toussenel, he nevertheless also continued to address his own message “to the socialists, [who] are now beginning to understand where the immense fortunes that never return to the workers are hidden.”

In fact, for his own newspaper *La Libre Parole*, he availed himself above all of collaborators from Blanquist and pro-Bonaparte socialist circles, such as Jean Drault, Pascal, and Gaston Papillard, whose contributions accentuated the newspaper’s authoritarian, antiparliamentary, and Caesaristic vocation. “Bonapartism” thus became, for the anti-Semites, the ideal solution for the crisis of parliamentarism.

In the pages of *La France juive*—as was to be expected—there is a prevalence of sources from the Christian anti-Jewish tradition and anti-Jewish and anti-Masonic modern Catholic literature. However, there is also (apart from quotations from the texts of Father Nicolas Deschamps and Gougenot des Mousseaux) an abundance of references to the words of Ernest Renan. Nevertheless, this art of combining heterogeneous influences does not allow the author to propose a clear and consistent representation of the “grande invasion juive de la Bourse,” but it does justify the urgency of the measures of the expropriation of Jewish financial feudalism, already invoked by Toussenel.

The meaning of the text was clearly grasped by the press of the time. Francis Magnard, editor of *Le Figaro*, considered the proposal of confiscating all Jewish property “from banks to opticians’ shops,” for the exclusive benefit of the worker-owned cooperatives, as “the germ of a Catholic Socialism” that sought to “rouse the unfortunate against the rich,” the Jews, and Republican politicians, “exactly as the Republicans incited the same unfortunates against the Catholic clergy and the budget expenditure in favor of religious cults.” Of course, *La France juive* was received and reviewed with enthusiasm not only by the Catholic press but also the papers of socialist groups and Bonapartists: after all, a few years earlier, during the campaign conducted by General Boulanger for an antiparliamentary review of the constitutional laws of the Third Republic, Drumont had declared his support for the plan for an authoritarian state proposed by the general, in the name of the ideals of cor-
Poratist Catholics but also “of the socialism of Fourier, Cabet, Pecqueur and Leroux.”

With regard to some recurring themes, the book could be likened to the propaganda of the anti-Semitic Viennese Social Christians. Nevertheless, the work represents a complete cross-section of the different categories of the anti-Jewish anticapitalism elaborated by Toussenel and of the Catholic anti-Judaism and reactionary anticapitalism (the polemic against “the Jewish gold”) that had already appeared in the pages of *Le juif, le judaïsme et la judaïsation des peuples chrétiens*, by the Catholic writer Gougenot des Mousseaux, who was an admirer of Louis de Bonald. It is also interesting to note that the plan to promote forms of workers’ social participation in company management, to finance production and consumer cooperatives with the funds confiscated from Jewish families, and to develop a corporative economy also received some appreciation from Benoît Malon, the editor of *Revue Socialiste*.

Various other socialist groups, such as the Blanquists, and Jules Guesde, the great authority of the Parti Ouvrier Français, discussed his ideas seriously. Guesde remained immune to his charm, but there is no doubt that the reception of Drumont’s projects was extensive, even if no one reached the point of basing his strategy explicitly on anti-Jewish anticapitalism. Anti-Semitism could, if anything, be exploited to break into some social classes—shopkeepers, small landowners, peasants—refractory to socialist propaganda, but it could not turn into a strategic focus of the labor movement.

The intention to contest the hegemony of the Catholic press over anti-Jewish social movements probably carried a lot of weight in the socialists’ decision to hold talks with Drumont. It was, in particular, the *Revue Socialiste* that, on the basis of an autonomous political decision, offered a platform for discussion and exchange of views to the different anti-Semitic socialist groupings. In fact, a few months before the publication of *La France juive*, the periodical had already included an article by Auguste Chirac, a leading exponent of the Blanquists known for his authoritarian and Caesaristic tendencies, who shortly thereafter would support General Boulanger. Chirac’s text, entitled “Les rois de la République. Histoire des juiveries,” was an extensive summary of a book he had published two years earlier with the same title, and it carried numerous references to Toussenel, proving the existence of a common background that could be traced back to the documents of the Catholic social economy, the writings of Bonald, and the texts of Toussenel (and Proudhon, too).

There is philological evidence that also constitutes a new connecting point: like Toussenel and Drumont, Chirac uses the term “juiverie,” with
which he attacks “the Jewish moneylenders and their despicable practices of usury,” including in the category all those who unlawfully take an unfair rate of profit. In fact, according to Chirac, all the “capitalists” can—as such—be defined Jews without actually being Jewish because the whole history of oppression and exploitation of labor has only been a centuries-long sequence of thefts and robberies, practiced by the different juiveries to the detriment “of the whole society.” Usury, thievery, social parasitism, and capitalist exploitation are all “Jewish practices.” The juiveries of the Jews were followed by those of Christians, heretics, Protestants, and “democratic and republican capitalists.” If any person of the Jewish faith may be correctly defined as “israélite,” “juif” instead denotes—for Chirac—every individual who actually plays an antisocial and parasitic role, “typical of the Jew,” to the detriment of the community. All capitalists can therefore be legitimately defined as “juifs” and treated accordingly: discriminated against, persecuted. The process of generalization and abstraction transforms the juifs, as real men, into a symbol of exploitation: le juif, and usury at the same time becomes the figure of speech of all the types of exploitation.

Drumont’s work is the last link in the chain that leads from the anti-Jewish tradition to the formulation of modern anti-Semitism, in which the social question is ideologically simplified, reduced, and falsified as the “Jewish question.” At the same time the book unwittingly paved the way for the richest collection of arguments, figures of speech, and rhetorical patterns that, shortly thereafter, would be reused for the falsification of the most deadly document of modern anti-Jewish propaganda, The Protocols of the Elders of Zion. Apart from Norman Cohn’s pioneering and still unsurpassed study of this apocryphal work, now we can read Pierre-André Taguieff’s investigation of its background, production, and translations and Cesare De Michelis’s analysis of the internal elements of the text and of its various versions. But De Michelis differs with the views of Cohn and Taguieff: while they believed that the Protocols were written in France between 1894 and 1899, De Michelis maintains that the fake was produced in Russia in 1902 or 1903. Let us consider this point, which is also important for our line of analysis of the French social and socialist anti-Jewish literature. Taguieff challenges the assumption that the Protocols (which, in its various editions, is subdivided into various chapters, theses, minutes, or protocols, ranging from 22 to 27) derives from an 1897 French archetype, translated into Russian in 1901 by agents of the tsarist secret service, the Ochrana, and sent to France by Petr Ivanovič Račkovskij. The Protocols was, in fact, first published in 1903 in install-
ments, in a newspaper of the extreme Right in St. Petersburg; the newspaper’s editor was the anti-Semitic journalist Paul A. Kruševan. It then appeared in the expanded version of 1905, anonymously and with the title The Root of Our Troubles. Finally, there was a third, smaller edition with the title Ancient and Modern Protocols of the Meetings of the Elders of Zion, published in Moscow in the same year (this version would derive from a text parallel to the two previous ones). Also in 1905 it was published in the editorial office run by Sergej Nilus (which, from 1918 onward, would disseminate the text throughout the world), as well as being edited by Kruševan’s friend Georgij V. Butmi.

De Michelis, however, does not believe the evidence of an 1897 version, which would have been read by Theodor Herzl, nor that there was a French manuscript owned by Nilus. He hypothesizes, instead, that, in 1902 the Protocols “were still under preparation . . . as a ‘genuine forgery’ (a fake attributed to the ancient King Solomon and ‘his wise men’) that would really have been drawn up by mysterious Jews.” Regarding the key point of the origin of the fake, he nevertheless laments the fact that the state of the research has remained pretty much where Henri Rollin had left it in 1939. But the latter—at variance with the views of De Michelis—hypothesized derivation from a manuscript written in French in Paris by the foreign section of the tsarist secret police. Furthermore, in contradiction of the hypothesis he had supported about the Russian origin, De Michelis lists some French texts that could have constituted a “backdrop” to the Protocols. In the first place, “the novel Biarritz (1868–1876) by H. Goedsche (1815–1878), part of which was immediately translated into Russian: the scene in the Jewish Cemetery in Prague was extrapolated from it, revised, presented as a ‘document’ with the title “The Rabbi’s Speech’ and, as such, also published as an appendix to Butmi.” In conclusion and in contradiction of his own hypothesis of its being produced in Russia, De Michelis admits (with Rollin) that the novel Biarritz or the text of Osman Bey (Frederic Millinger’s pseudonym) might have been the outlines that the mysterious author could have used to adapt the real subtext of the Protocols: the Dialogue aux enfers entre Machiavel et Montesquieu, written by Maurice Joly.

This last statement introduces a further contradiction in De Michelis’s hypothesis. Carlo Ginzburg observed that

the supposed Russian origin is hard to reconcile with the strict dependence of the Protocols on Joly’s Dialogue aux enfers: a forgotten text, and hard to find. De Michelis argues that the Dialogue aux enfers was not at
all a virtually unknown work but, in support of this statement, he can only cite a Spanish translation, which appeared after thirty years of silence in Buenos Aires, in 1898.  

(Joly’s book, published anonymously in Brussels, was reprinted with the author’s name only in 1868.) To sum up, De Michelis considers Joly’s book a “subtext” of the Protocols, the former being used to reconstruct the textual transmission of the latter, but, nevertheless, he supposes, in vague terms, that the allegedly Russian authors of the fake had had important links with France.

The alleged Russian counterfeitors would naturally be the two anti-Semitic journalists and writers Kruševan and Butmi. However, both had frequent contact with the French and would have conceived the fake as a reaction to the Zionist Congress of 1901, the pogroms of 1903, and the revolutionary events of 1905. At this point, Nilus would have been involved, “perhaps to divert attention.” In short: the birth of the fake was deliberately shrouded in a fog that allowed its first postwar translators (it was no coincidence that they were all Catholic clergymen) to recognize the doctrinal patterns of the Christian anti-Jewish tradition and then to vouch for the “veracity” of the text, leaving aside its authenticity. De Michelis accepts the “substantial pro-Catholic inclination of the text” and its “dependence” on the French, European Catholic, and intransigent literature, in reaction to the Revolution of 1789 and, therefore, on the traditional polemic against the Protestant Reformation and the recurring conspiracies of the “enemies of the nation”—the Jews—but also the Huguenots and Masons, all followers of the Enlightenment philosophy.

Regarding the question of the French prehistory of the Protocols, I add only that Carlo Ginzburg has made two crucial contributions. The first concerns the nature of the political message of the subtext of the Protocols. The second is the role of Édouard Drumont both in the fusion of anti-Jewish Catholic concepts with those of socialist anti-Semitism and in the relationship between the Dialogue aux Enfers entre Machiavel et Montesquieu and the Protocols.

The discovery that Joly’s text was a decisive source for the authors of the fake has long obscured the originality of thought of the author, who paid for his originality by being convicted of seditious insults against Napoleon III. Joly drew inspiration from the tradition of the literary genre of the “dialogue of the dead,” revisited through Charles Nodier and Fontenelle, he also formally opposed law (Montesquieu) to force (Machiavelli), which he considered perfectly represented by the Caesaristic system. In addition, he proposed the apologia of the separation of powers and the constitutional state,
but at the same time he also admitted that in a France shaken by the two revolutions of 1848, peace and prosperity could be restored by a policy of strong centralization, hierarchical administration, and antiliberal legislation: in other words, by a new kind of despotism, constructed and decreed by the coup d’état of December 2, 1852. Following in the footsteps of Troplong and Romier, but more pessimistic than Tocqueville, Joly hypothesized the need for a new model of despotism, capable of neutralizing the division of powers, parliamentarianism and political freedoms, without being forced to repeal them.135

After dispassionately analyzing the despotism produced by Louis Napoleon’s coup d’état—paradoxically sanctioned and approved by universal suffrage—therefore also recognizing its objective strength and effectiveness, Joly’s imaginary Machiavelli develops the author’s ideas, concealing their real source, the thought of Joseph de Maistre. Meanwhile, through the words of Montesquieu, he defines Caesarism as an amalgam of authoritarian control and legitimacy, able to manipulate public opinion while granting freedom of the press and elections: the Caesaristic system could bestow such generous concessions because the real power lay elsewhere, outside the sphere of democratic control.

A year before the *Dialogue in the Underworld*, Joly published a book entitled *Le barreau de Paris. Études politiques et littéraires*: a series of general reflections mixed with portraits, often satirical in tone, of lawyers. . . . In a note in *Le barreau de Paris*, Joly referred scornfully to the “folly of constitutions and their inability to build anything.” Soon afterwards he praised De Maistre . . . and quoted, approvingly, a series of passages from the *Essai sur le principe générateur des constitutions politiques et des autres institutions humaines* . . . which retraced the already quoted passage from the *Considérations sur la France*, including the reference to Machiavelli’s *Discorsi*.136

In 1921, a *Times* journalist, Robert Graves, demonstrated that the *Protocols* were simply a fake produced using the works of Joly, Hermann Goedsche, and other authors. Then, in 1939, Henri Rollin reconstructed the background of the apocryphal work, showing that, since 1871, Joly had been writing for an extreme right-wing newspaper, *La Liberté*, to which Édouard Drumont also offered articles. And Drumont had praised Joly in *La France juive* and then in his last work, of 1891.137 One can presume that, in exile in Brussels since 1894 in order to evade French justice, Drumont had probably had the opportunity
of rereading the *Dialogue aux enfers*, which had been published in Brussels, and could well have thought of using this work in drawing up his authoritarian and anti-Semitic political program in the critical years of the Dreyfus Affair.\textsuperscript{138}

Grégoire Kauffmann, biographer of Édouard Drumont, concludes his massive biography with an unequivocal judgment: “In the final analysis, his attitude remained that of a counter-revolutionary indebted to the writings of Veuillot, Blanc de Saint-Bonnet and the doctrines of social Catholicism before the *Ralliement*.\textsuperscript{139} Fundamentalist Catholicism, neo-Caesarism, and social anti-Semitism were therefore, according to Kauffmann, the constant ingredients of Drumont’s propaganda. His very tardy acceptance of the republican system, dating only from the early years of the twentieth century, can in effect be categorized as a very obvious maneuver of political opportunism, decided upon after the defeat of his last anti-Semitic offensive, unleashed with the operation “Monument Henry,” in defense of one of the falsifiers of the alleged evidence of the guilt of Captain Dreyfus.

In August 1898, Colonel Henry had indeed confessed to having fabricated the document read to the National Assembly by Minister of War Cavagnac, on July 7, supporting the evidence of the charges brought against Alfred Dreyfus. The falsifier, having been arrested and sent to the fortress of Mont-Valérien, had been found dead the following day, having either committed suicide or been the victim of an arranged “suicide.” The incrimination of Henry had turned the tide in favor of those seeking a review of the trial that had led to the captain’s conviction, to such an extent as to make Drumont himself accept its inevitability. However, in order to react to the humiliating blow, Drumont had unscrupulously dismissed any principle of legal certainty, maintaining that Henry had courageously created a “patriotic fake” with the praiseworthy intention of supporting his superiors, committed to defending the national interest. Henry’s “apocryphal document, was in fact only a copy or representation of the truth, because it was a synthesis of authentic passages.”\textsuperscript{140}

In those same weeks, Drumont’s newspaper, *La Libre Parole*, unleashed a fierce press campaign against the judges of the Court of Cassation who seemed favorably inclined to acceding to the request for a review of the Dreyfus trial. For the umpteenth time, Drumont took up the leadership of the extreme wing of the anti-Dreyfus front in which Brunetièrè’s Ligue de la Patrie and Déroulède’s Ligue des Patriotes had begun—on the contrary—to insist on the distinction between a firm belief in Dreyfus’s guilt and the anti-Semitic
battle. Drumont’s efforts resulted in fund raising for Henry’s widow for the legal action against the colonel’s “slanderers,” and in this battle, his last, Drumont used some arguments that are worth examining.

In order to prove definitively the guilt of Dreyfus, Drumont defined the fabrication by Colonel Henry, as an apocryphal document that, in any case, stated the truth through the “synthesis of authentic passages.” In this regard, Rollin points out that, from 1894 to 1898, Drumont had repeatedly threatened to resurrect some anti-Napoleonic pamphlets that had appeared during the Second Empire: he had also written a text inspired by Joly’s Dialogue aux enfers. Ginzburg—following in the footsteps of Rollin—insists: “All this does not prove that Drumont turned to the Dialogue aux enfers as a potentially anti-Semitic text, presenting an invented text as if it were a document, nor does it prove that Drumont forwarded Joly’s text to whoever, in Russia, made up the Protocols. But the Drumont trail deserves a detailed examination.” The allusion to the “synthesis of authentic passages” could, in any case, be adopted as a definition of the procedure of falsification of the Protocols.

Dumont was a mediocre writer who dabbled more or less skillfully with the categories and figures of speech of Catholic anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism. His own flight to Brussels was dictated by the urgency of evading the legal consequences of some of his imprudent and speciously subversive articles, which constituted a danger for him after the assassination of President of the Republic Sadi Carnot. Nevertheless, until 1897, his relations with some socialist leaders remained good, above all with those militants who were more in favor of the alliance with the left-wing radicals in an antimoderate perspective. Drumont was a supporter of the radical government led by Léon Bourgeois and was therefore on good terms with Millerand, Viviani, and Rouanet but also with those militants convinced that anti-Semitic propaganda was an excellent way to familiarize the artisans, traders, shopkeepers, and small landowners with anticapitalist themes. In La Libre Parole, Drumont applauded, several times, the socialists’ strong opposition to the subsequent Méline government. He also criticized the alignment of some Catholics with the Republic, going so far as to advocate a common front (led by Viviani, who, moreover, in 1897 did a great deal to nominate Drumont for Algiers, during the general election) made up of anti-Semites, radicals, socialists, and Catholics against Jewish financiers.

But the trail of the relationship between Drumont and the authors of the Protocols is also worth investigating in another direction. One cannot help being struck by the symmetry of his definition of the fake published by Colonel
Henry as an “apocryphal work” but “a synthesis of authentic passages” and the sophisticated defense of the “truthfulness” of the Protocols, well beyond their “authenticity,” proposed by postwar Catholic commentators: Mgr Jouin, Mons. Benigni, Preziosi, up to Evola. Drumont, like Jouin or Benigni, did not define a text falsely attributed to an age or to an author as being “apocryphal” but took this term to mean a hidden or secret text.

Moreover, the lines of thought and the chain of texts stratified in the works of Drumont are the same as those used in the preparation of the Protocols. The former is that neo-Machiavellian and pro-Bonapartist line of thought embodied by de Maistre, represented and used by Joly: namely, de Maistre who commented on the note in Discorsi sulla prima Deca di Tito Livio (book 1, chapter 9): therefore, the author of the Considérations sur la France, published anonymously in 1796 in Lausanne, at the same time as the unfinished Étude sur la souveraineté, where (in chapter 6, “On Divine Influence in Political Constitutions”) de Maistre wrote that no constitution is the result of a decision and the rights of peoples have never been written down:

At least, the written constitutional acts and fundamental laws are never anything but ratifications of earlier rights, of which nothing can be said except that they exist. . . . Any assembly of men cannot therefore constitute a nation; such a feat even exceeds, in folly, the most absurd and the most bizarre inventions which could be produced by all the Bedlams in the world.

De Maistre concluded his tirade against humanism and constitutional law by commenting ironically on Montesquieu and presenting a political vision based on natural differences among men, determined by their blood: “Now there is no ‘the’ man in the world. In my life I’ve seen the French, the Italians, the Russians, etc.; I also know, thanks to Montesquieu, that one can be Persian, but as for ‘the’ man, I declare that I have never met one, if he exists he is unknown to me.”

Structures and institutions are not invented but “germinate” from historical conditions or are granted by the monarch on the basis of use, traditions, and ancient customs that make them necessary. In fact, it is impossible to determine the historical origin of the “primitive basis” from which “constitutions” arise, and human reason, reduced to its own forces, is unable to create any political or religious communities. Therefore, the true nature of sovereignty is that of an absolute power, unique, inviolable, and despotic, that
tolerates no limitations, even if it can admit political liberties and freedom of the press, provided they are not recognized as “rights” of a higher order than sovereignty. Drumont was, therefore, in his works, in complete harmony with de Maistre, Toussenel’s preface to _Les juifs, rois de l’époque_, and Joly’s _Dialogue_.

But the heart of Maurice Joly’s political reflections appears, instead, to be in tune with a famous judgment of Tocqueville: that, since the French Revolution, it would have been impossible for the aristocratic social system to return and remain in place, but this would also have applied to the advent of a stable democracy. Instead, turmoil, uncertainty, and crisis (the revolution that never ends) would have been permanent. In other words, the crisis of the ancien régime seems never-ending and is summed up in an eternal oscillation between wild anarchy, on the brink of civil war, and limitless power (in Hobbesian terms: between Behemoth and Leviathan). The anarchist revolution seems destined to end up naturally in the greatest centralization there has ever been.

According to Tocqueville, there is an inexorable march toward centralization and “democratic” political despotism. This runs parallel to the structural changes of the market economy, the great economic transformation that swept away the ancien régime and the economy integrated in the social bonds (_liens sociaux_). It also imposed the self-regulating market through political divisions. In other words, despotic centralization prevents regression to the protected, aristocratic, corporative society of the ancien régime. However, it also blocks the political mechanisms of liberal democracy and allows only the economic-social ones, namely the democratic leveling of material conditions and moral conformity. Therefore, all forms of despotism, from absolute monarchy to postrevolutionary Caesarism—again according to Tocqueville—pave the way for a new political model with real social effects, for a new autocracy that also invades the economic sphere and becomes an essential regulator of social structures, for an invasive pan-political model that builds its own institutional authoritarian procedures and imposes a social hierarchy while also dictating the requirements of moral conformity.

This is the same model of power envisaged, in the same period, by Auguste Comte and Honoré de Balzac. The former, in opposing moral anarchy, designed a model of social unity based on the balance between spiritual and industrial power within an authoritarian but not inflexible, system.
Balzac had drawn the most drastic conclusions from his own analysis of the economy and social conflict in nineteenth-century rural France, a conflict between yield, usury, speculating, on the one hand, and property, production and consumption, on the other hand.\textsuperscript{153} “If the welfare of the masses is the very foundation of politics, absolutism, or rather most of the available power—however one wants to define it—is the best way to achieve this great social purpose.” This is how, in \textit{Le curé du village}, Abbé Bonnet expresses his hopes for the advent of a man of Providence, “a Caesar, whether he is called Mario, Silla or Louis Napoleon.”\textsuperscript{154}

The second line of analysis that concerns the work of Drumont and the \textit{Protocols} leads back to the starting point of our journey. I am referring to the transmission of anticapitalist, anti-Jewish concepts from Bonald to Gougenot des Mousseaux and from Toussenel to Drumont and Chirac: hence, the whole nineteenth-century secular context of French politics and the civil conflict that, from 1789, separated France into two divided nations. The French pre-history of the \textit{Protocols} is immersed in this context.\textsuperscript{155}

From this line descends a populist mythology and the polemic against the upper class: two hundred families (\textit{les gros: les deux cents familles}), dominated by an imaginary handful of cosmopolitan Jews, exploited the \textit{bon peuple de France} and all its social classes since the fall of the ancien régime. This negative myth left traces in a multitude of documents, libelous booklets, and pamphlets of many nineteenth-century parties, from the Bonapartists to the radicals, from the socialists to the Catholics, but also in the Popular Front.\textsuperscript{156}

The conspiratorial representation of the Revolution had been strongly intertwined with the literature that considers the Jewish plot responsible for the eruption of 1789, from Barruel to Bonald, from Maurras to Drumont, up to the French translator of the \textit{Protocols}, Mgr Jouin;\textsuperscript{157} through this literature, the French reception of the \textit{Protocols} became a part of the traditional denunciation of the Jewish Enlightenment, of Masonic conspiracy, and of the negative mythology of the \textit{deux cents families} and the \textit{mur d’argent}.\textsuperscript{158}

Thus, in the late nineteenth century, the myth of the collaboration among Masons, Protestants, and Jews went on circulating in the literature on financial scandals, political corruption, profiteering, and opportunism, and Drumont projected this picture onto an international scale, echoing the literature of the Viennese social Christians and the German anti-Semites. After his death, Jacques Ploncard d’Assac and Henry Coston relaunched the newspaper \textit{La Libre Parole} and in the 1930s took up his arguments in order to support the anti-Jewish campaign unleashed by Maurras against Léon Blum.\textsuperscript{159}
HANNAH ARENDT’S INTERPRETATION OF EMANCIPATION AND SOCIAL ANTI-SEMITISM

Only the tragedy of Captain Alfred Dreyfus forced the European socialist labor movement to consider seriously the devastating consequences of anti-Jewish hostility, to change its position on democracy, to abandon any idea of politically exploiting anti-Semitism. Nevertheless, it must be stressed that, just a few years earlier, during the 1891 Congress of the Socialist International held in Brussels, the motion presented by the Jewish, Lithuanian American militant Abe Cahan regarding the Jewish question, had been rejected. That strategic defeat was perhaps attributable to the reservations and uncertainties expressed by one of the most important leaders of the International, Victor Adler, who wanted to maintain a position of equidistant from Cahan’s motion and the anti-Semitic attitudes of the French socialists close to Auguste Chirac, and in particular two of them, Albert Reynard, the author of some racist texts, and the Franco-Macedonian Paul Agyriades.

The Brussels Congress occurred just two years after the establishment of the Second International. It showed the persistent strength of the social anti-Jewish prejudice among its members and the timidity of the leaders of the European labor movement in opposing it: there was also therefore a vast anti-Jewish, anticapitalist cultural background in large sections of the International; at the same time, the most prominent theoreticians of German, Austrian, and Russian Polish Marxist socialism, who were also in the best condition to observe the phenomenon, revealed themselves unable to address and define the complex social and class composition of European Jews. Many of them were totally unaware of the strength of the Christian anti-Jewish historical tradition, even among factory workers.

Socialists ignored, above all, the fact that the socioeconomic conditions of Jews in Central and Eastern Europe were different from those of the Jews in Western and Southern Europe. The difference in the legal conditions and the complexity of the social stratification of the Jewish population remained an enigma for socialist culture, which was locked in an evolutionary representation of the contradictions of the market economy that would ultimately lead to the collapse of the capitalist system and the advent of socialism: therefore, to the social emancipation of the Jews and the solution of the Jewish question.

In this socialist vision, the elimination of the discriminatory and persecutory legacy of the ancien régime still dominant in Eastern and Central Europe,
and the solution of the Jewish question, therefore also the overcoming of the “Jewish way of achieving emancipation through the power of money,” would come automatically from the triumph of socialism. The anti-Jewish manifestations of hostility in the working class and the socialist movement were therefore ignored or willfully misconstrued as expressions of a class rebellion against “the Jewish capitalists.” The scandal of the Dreyfus Affair constituted, as has been said, a watershed, but it failed to effect a complete change in these positions.

In the face of such blindness, one could well ask whether it was the result of ignorance or even, in the case of the Jewish leaders of the Socialist International, a symptom of Jewish self-hatred (Jüdische Selbsthass). 161 But the hypothesis that even in Marx’s thought a theoretical anti-Semitism found expression does not, however, appear valid: if it is true that, in those years, there was an anti-Jewish anti-capitalism, above all among non-Marxist socialists, Marx and the culture of the socialist Marxist labor movement strongly favored emancipation while remaining confined to an Enlightenment interpretation of Jewish history. 162 This meant envisaging the overcoming of discrimination through emancipation and assimilation. Judaism—like any legacy of tradition, any religion, any alienation of self-awareness—would disappear with the integration of the Jewish nation in the European ones and, especially, with the establishment of an egalitarian society and the abolition of the exploitation of man by man.

The exponents of the “Jewish Enlightenment”—the Haskalah—had at one time cultivated the illusion that legal emancipation and the liberal state would drive the “Jewish people” to eliminate any backwardness and to effect their assimilation in society, and the socialists shared the same view. In this respect, for Mendelssohn as for Kautsky, the fate of the Jewish nation was to disappear in the process of the brotherhood of all nations. The socialists of the Second International were firmly convinced that the abolition of capitalism and the Jewish trade “monopoly” would represent the ultimate form of assimilation and would also eliminate the roots of anti-Jewish anti-capitalism and anti-Semitism. 163 The Marxist socialism of the Second International took up the Darwinian evolutionary paradigm and tried to reconcile it with the liberal model of assimilation, representing it as the inevitable outcome of the march of history: Jewish emancipation should have translated itself into the “liberation of society from Judaism.”

But that utopia collided with reality in Eastern European societies because in Lithuania, Ukraine, Poland, and Russia (in the area of residence imposed
upon the Jews in the tsarist empire), any possibility of assimilation was de-
nied by the persistence of the discrimination imposed by the absolutist tradi-
tion. Thus, in the context of the aspirations for autonomy expressed by all the
nationalities settled in the territories of the Russian Empire and the Central
and Eastern European empires, even among the Jews of the area of residence
and the Jewish working class, there began to develop a political plan aiming at
claiming national self-determination as a condition of social emancipation.

Since his intervention against Bruno Bauer (who had denied the right to
emancipation to subjects he considered inferior to the Christians), Marx had
proposed a strategy of legal assimilation and social liberation, and this was, as
Bernard Lazare and Martin Buber would have recognized, 164 totally at vari-
ance with the ferocious social hostility of Proudhon and Toussenel toward the
Jewish banker (the moneylender). 165 Regarding Marx’s position, George L.
Mosse has noted that “Marx, in short, departed significantly from the conclu-
sions of the French socialists, who wanted to expel or annihilate the Jews,”
and Isaiah Berlin has observed that “the German Ideology, the Manifesto of
the Communist Party and the controversial pages of Capital are the work of a
man shaking his fist against the establishment and, in the manner of an an-
cient Jewish prophet, speaking on behalf of the elect, proclaiming the death of
the accursed system.” 166

Berlin explains that if the interpretation of Marx as an anti-Semite is
groundless, just as unconvincing is the opposite view of those, such as Karl
Löwith, 167 who propose a structural homology between Jewish messianism
and historical materialism: in fact, the link between theology and romanti-
cism appears more typical of Marxist writers such as Ernst Bloch and Walter
Benjamin than Marx himself, a “non-Jewish Jew.” 168

In his opinion, in the German states, France, and the United States, the
Jewish question took on different forms: it was “theological” (the conflict be-
tween the community and the denominational states) in Germany but consti-
tutional in France and culturally pluralistic in the United States. And human
liberation from the subjection to religion remained an unresolved issue ev-
erywhere because the democratic revolution and the constitutional state had
left open the split between public secularism and private faith: this was the
limit that also remained inherent in legal emancipation, which had failed to
diminish the substance and traditional structure of Judaism.

Legal emancipation could not be a complete and authentic “human eman-
cipation” because the liberal state would not have eliminated the alienation
represented by the existence of religion as a social phenomenon, as, for
example, in the case of the split between the private and public man. More specifically, the meaning of modern Judaism now had to be found not in its religious essence but in the activities of the Jews, in the trades that, for centuries, they had been obliged to undertake—because of the bans preventing them from entering other professions—as well as the economic practices that, thanks to the development of capitalism, had lost their “Jewish” specificity and had become Christian. The “chimerical nationality” of the Jews had dissolved in the world of capital, which was at one and the same time the essence of Judaism and an essential feature of modern society. Hence, the overcoming of capitalist social relations would also be identified with the emancipation of the Jews from “substantial” Judaism and from their social, commercial, and financial activities.  

So, on the one hand, Marx reduced the Jewish question to the figure of the geldmensch Jew in a capitalism identified only with free trade; on the other hand, while appreciating legal equality, he ignored the overwhelming dimension of the Jewish question, the oppression and persecution still dominant in Eastern Europe, a region in which the prevailing condition of the Jew was not that of the merchant.  

The same basic anticapitalist approach in favor of emancipation and assimilation was shared by the leaders of German and Habsburg Social Democrats, Franz Mehring, Victor Adler, Karl Kautsky, and Otto Bauer, even if, however, they were more inclined to see popular anti-Semitism as including the expression of a primitive form of anticapitalism, but—paradoxically—in its Eastern Europe context, also as the mass base of the absolutist regime’s self-defense. Even the Jewish Social Democratic leaders in Russia (such as Pavel Axelrod, Fyodor Ilych Dan, Lev Grigorievic Deutsch, Julius Martov) and Poland (such as Leo Jogiches, Adolf Warski, and Rosa Luxemburg) did not diverge too much from this representation.  

Victor Adler was the first leader of the Social Democrats to initiate, in 1887, a real debate on anti-Semitism. In his interpretative framework, emancipation was considered the outcome of the final, or at least partial, victory of the bourgeoisie in the western and central regions of the continent. In other words, the victory of the self-regulating market and “free competition” of the economic forces, which would have rendered discrimination against the Jews anachronistic and would also have had to produce the integration in modern capitalism of a people specialized in trade “by inheritance and tradition.” According to Adler, anti-Semitism therefore arose from an ignorance of the dynamics of modern commercial society, a willful ignorance, widespread
among the artisans, merchants, and peasants of Central and Eastern Europe. Adler gave the example of the Austrian middle classes, less competitive than the Jewish middle class, numerous in the capital of the Habsburg Empire. Surprisingly, however, this strong social hostility against the Jews did not lead him to consider the urgency of defending their rights as equal citizens or protecting the Jewish proletariat. Even though he recognized that the Jewish working class was “materially and spiritually poorer” than the German or Austro-Hungarian proletariats (as was claimed by the Bund of the area of Jewish settlement of the Russian Empire), Adler concluded that the proletarians of the Habsburg Empire would have to fight against every kind of exploitation, both “Christian” and “Jewish,” without concerning themselves with the conflict between the middle classes.

His position explains why, at the Brussels Congress four years later, Adler presented a motion that rejected both anti- and pro-Semitism as being tantamount to the same thing. Abe Cahan’s motion was far more forthright both in condemning anti-Semitism, discrimination, and persecution in Russia and Central and Eastern Europe, and in criticizing the restrictions in the United States on accepting Jewish refugees from Europe. Adler’s position, reproduced by Franz Mehring in the Neue Zeit in “Anti- und Philosemitisches,” and then in the report submitted by Bebel at the German Social Democratic Congress of Cologne in 1893, was finally codified in 1907 by Otto Bauer in his essay on the question of nationalities. And, despite the brilliant insight of Édouard Bernstein, who had suggested a link between the reaction of threatened privileged groups and anti-Semitism, this emancipationist paradigm remained unchanged even when anti-Jewish movements grew dramatically during the crisis years at the end of the century.

At the same time, hostility toward alleged “Jewish capitalism” even infiltrated the political rallies of a part of European socialism, increasingly influenced by Boulanger’s neo-Bonapartism, worried about competition from Lueger’s Social Christians, charmed by the formulas of Drumont’s propaganda.

The concept of nation as a “community of destiny” nevertheless enabled the Austrian socialists to propose, to the various nationalities, the solution of legal autonomy and to deal with all the centrifugal tendencies that were tearing apart the Habsburg Empire at the end of the nineteenth century. As for the Ostjuden, according to Bauer, they had by then ceased to be a nation and religious community, having become a social community specializing in small business and trades. For this reason, asking for their national autonomy
was clearly an anachronism because their destiny would be assimilation and social emancipation from the market. 175

From another point of view the judgments of Leo Jogiches and Rosa Luxemburg were also influenced by the situation that had split the Polish socialist movement, since 1892, into two bitterly hostile camps: while the Polish Social-Democratic movement of Luxemburg and Jogiches, with its Marxist and internationalist orientation, was being formed, the majority of Polish socialists had instead adhered to nationalist positions. Their objective, therefore, already proclaimed in Paris in 1892 and confirmed in the founding congress of the Polish Socialist Party (PPS) in Vilna in 1893, was to create a Polish state independent from the Russian Empire. And as citizens of the future Polish state, the Jews of the North Western Settlement Zone should therefore have formed a “common front” with the Polish revolutionaries (Lithuania had been part of the kingdom of Poland until 1772–75). On the contrary, the reaction of the Jewish socialists to the political strategy of Józef Piłsudski was the strengthening of demands for autonomy. 176

The condition of the socialists of various tendencies in other regions of the Russian Empire was even more complex. The inclination of the Russian populists to interpret the pogroms as an expression of peasant rebellion (an interpretation that had prevailed in the movement in 1881 and 1882) was probably abandoned by Narodnaia Volia as early as 1886. Shortly thereafter, the opposite view, that the pogroms had, on the contrary, played into the hands of the tsarist regime became a judgment shared by various groups: these included the liberal opposition forces gathered around the magazine Osvobozhdenie, the populist movement organized by the Socialist Revolutionary Party in 1902, and the new Marxist Social-Democracy Party with its proletarian orientation. Within the latter, in 1903, Plechanov condemned the “nationalistic psychological effects” of pogroms and began a determined fight against anti-Semitism.

One of the responses to political persecution in the settlement area was the Jewish emigrationist ideology, divided between an emigration movement to the United States, supported by American Jewish laborism, and a movement for founding colonies in Palestine, supported by Lev Pinsker (even if he had been skeptical about the possibility of returning to Palestine.) 177

By 1904, Herzl had died, and the crisis of the structures of the empire was worsening. This is not surprising when one bears in mind the process of democratic political revolution, peasant and worker social insurrection, and the nationalities seeking autonomy. This scenario laid the foundations for a new
policy of Jewish liberation while, at the same time, Marxist social democracy passed from small intellectual circles in exile, torn among the positions of Axelrod, Plechanov, and Zasulic, to being a real, albeit smaller, political party, the Socialist Revolutionaries. Among those involved in establishing social democracy, apart from many socialist Jewish leaders with an internationalist orientation, there was also the General Jewish Labour Union in Lithuania, Poland, and Russia (the Bund), which had the specific objective of transforming the Jewish proletariat into a revolutionary force.

While social democracy in the Russian Empire therefore arose as an internationalist party, aiming at the federation of all the nationalities, the consolidation of the Jewish socialist movement among the proletariat and the accentuation of its democratic tendencies paved the way for a program for Jewish national autonomy. Thus, even where the dominant tendency in the socialist parties permitted the autonomy of its Jewish section, the socialist internationalist tendency prevailed among the Jews. However, where the strategy remained tied to the concept of assimilation, autonomist or nationalist movements came into being. Therefore, until the founding of the Bund, the Jewish social democratic revolutionaries were operating simultaneously both in the Russian and Jewish movements.  

The founding of the Russian Social Democratic Party must be considered the result of the joint action of the socialist committee of Kiev and the Bund. The event represented the true integration of the Jewish revolutionary movement (which nevertheless remained autonomous) in a political structure with an international but not centralized vocation. Thus, there was a balance between the principle of legal emancipation (the proletariat had an interest in getting rid of the discrimination imposed on the Jews) and the practical need for a specific and autonomous organization of the Jewish proletariat. What actually happened was that, in 1903, the clash between the “Bundist” autonomism and the strategy of the most dynamic and dominant group of the Russian social democrats, the Iskra organization, came to a head. In fact, not even the healing of the rift between the Bundists and the social democrats, three years later, eliminated the roots of a conflict deeply rooted in the political, economic, and social Russian scenario between the end of the nineteenth century and the 1905 revolution. It was only during the latter that the Bolshevik conception of the so-called Jewish question was formed. This also explains the continuity between the pro-assimilation positions of Lenin, Martov, and Trotsky and the subsequent policy of the People’s Commissariat for nationalities, managed by Stalin.
The credit for the first reflection on the contradictions of the Enlightenment and socialist policy on the Jewish question goes to Hannah Arendt. In the first of her studies on Judaism, written in 1932, when she was only twenty-six, Arendt attributed the birth of the Jewish question precisely to emancipation. Attained in the early nineteenth century in some German states, in the wake of the Bonapartist occupation, and preceded by the battle of the Enlightenment, it was the conquest of rights by a people segregated for centuries, “as if one were living in a land which was not one’s own.”\(^{181}\) But emancipation had caused a terrifying reaction.

Arendt’s criticism was directed not only against Prussian legislation and its French antecedents; in her criticism of emancipation, she also included the pro-assimilationist positions of the socialists. This was because even their idea of emancipation did not aim at preserving the identity of the Jewish people, nor therefore permitting its integration in the constitutional state, but it merely transformed into positive regulations the principles of Enlightenment ethics, namely recognizing the Jews “as human beings equal to other human beings.” The Jews would have been guaranteed the same rights enjoyed by non-Jews as members of humanity, therefore enlightened by universal reason. Since the time of Moses Mendelssohn’s assimilation and Christian Wilhelm von Dohm’s study (\textit{Über die bürgerliche Verbesserung der Juden}, 1781), there continually appeared, in the debate on emancipation, the same arguments that found their classic formulation in Lessing: “For Lessing, reason, which all humans share in common, is the foundation of humanity.”\(^{182}\)

The ideal of tolerance—insisted Arendt—cannot however be justified on the basis of reason, understood as “a purely formal quality.” Lessing had argued that the search for truth by rational means (\textit{Sapere aude!}) was more important than the truth that can finally be reached through reason. Enlightenment philosophy could not keep its promise because it ignored the fact that religious faith was a form of the same search. In the new age of reason, it was not essential to arrive at a truth, presenting it as a dogma or an objective thesis, but—so Arendt argued—to search for the truth: the history of humanity searching for the truth is more important than the content of the truth.\(^{183}\)

The Enlightenment philosophers, instead, had been under the illusion that the Jews could remain tied to the religion of their fathers only in so far as the content of the Old Testament did not clash with the dictates of reason. The Jews would have remained faithful only to the convictions they had in common with all those who were searching for the truth: Christians, atheists, Muslims . . . everyone would have gone back to being “human beings among
other human beings” while emancipation and the attainment of rights would have started a process of total assimilation. So emancipation produced the perverse effect of isolating every individual compelled to think only of his own interest and produced equality, but it eliminated identities and differences based on history.\textsuperscript{184}

Thus, Arendt was reproposing a criticism of emancipation that had already been proposed by Herder, who had attacked the Enlightenment in the name of a different ideal “ethical and aesthetic of \textit{Humanität}.”\textsuperscript{185} This was also a fight against the legal model of emancipation in the name of the right of Jews to restore their past history. It is only history that can construct self-awareness. Therefore only the self-representation of their historical destiny would have offered the Jews a solid basis to reconstruct a consciousness of their past, hence of Jewish civilization. Only the historical understanding of Jewish civilization would have allowed the Jews to free themselves of it and would have permitted emancipation to be achieved through an authentic education (\textit{Bildung}). An emancipation based on the legal abstraction of equality, on the cancellation of Jewish identity and its history, would merely have caused an immense void of consciousness. Only through an understanding of their own exceptional history would the Jews, a historic people, become aware of not being God’s chosen people and free themselves of the weight of the past, accepting their own history and going beyond their own tradition:

With this discovery of the irrevocability of all that has happened, Herder became one of the first great interpreters of history. It was through him that in Germany the history of the Jews first became visible as a history defined essentially by their possession of the Old Testament. This resulted in a change in the response to the Jewish question, by both Jews themselves and the larger world. This change was also influenced by new definitions that Herder provided for two concepts so crucial in this context: formation and tolerance.\textsuperscript{186}

So it was the Enlightenment conception of legal equality that had given rise to the Jewish question. Herder had not sought an abstract equality of the Jewish people in relation to all other peoples, but he had, on the contrary, emphasized their extraneousness and the identity of their religion, which was not meant to be “tolerated” but rather understood, and this could be achieved by focusing on the recognition of its history, producing tolerance. The Jewish question would be resolved not through a forced elimination of religious
difference but through its historical recognition and the political decision to overcome the past, starting a new course. “Herder understands the history of the Jews in the same way that they interpret it, as the history of God’s Chosen People.”

One year after the publication of the text, Arendt was arrested in Berlin and accused of conspiring with a Zionist organization. However, there was no contradiction between this political choice and her theoretical positions. The failure of emancipation and the victory of anti-Semitism in 1933 had had catastrophic consequences for the rights of Jews, and so Arendt chose to collaborate with the Zionist groups of Youth Aliyah because they seemed the only ones capable of actively and promptly confronting the mortal dangers which threatened German Jews. This did not mean that she shared the political objective of a nation-state—far from it. Arendt never stated that actively supporting yshuv (settling) in Palestine constituted a legitimization of the 1917 Balfour Declaration, and her husband, Heinrich Blücher, a Marxist and activist in the Spartacus Bund and the German Communist Party, had a decidedly anti-Zionist orientation.

The freedom of a people marginalized and oppressed for two millennia was a challenge to the very possibility of thinking about human freedom. This could only have been attained by binding the Jewish fate to that of the emancipation of humanity. Arendt felt that it was only the working class that could fight for the freedom of all humanity (and this seemed particularly true in Germany). Unlike Blücher, though, Arendt did not identify freedom with the social revolution. Instead, she focused exclusively on the contradictions of the Enlightenment’s legal-political perspective and its legacy in the communist and socialist strategies. In her view, the position of the Jews in Western Europe, even after emancipation, was still ambiguous. They had the status of latecomers, or parvenus, who were striving to achieve success and recognition in the gentile world. However, they could not escape the consequences of their Jewish roots and therefore be truly accepted in European society. In other words, they remained the true pariahs of European society and were considered “the lowest human beings.” During the hundred and fifty years in which they have lived among the Western peoples, and not only near them—she writes in The Origins of Totalitarianism—the Jews have always had to pay for any social success with political paucity, or for political success with social contempt.

The Jews had been barely tolerated in the societies of the ancien régime and had always been isolated among the gentiles. Then they had become the
parvenus of bourgeois society, and the hostility toward the Jews appeared to be the direct consequence of their identification with the alleged exploiters of the national community, first, as tax collectors and moneylenders, then, as entrepreneurs or bankers. Emancipation, the most important watershed in Jewish history after the Diaspora, would, in fact, have caused a covert resentment against the bourgeoisie that had wanted emancipation and therefore also against the Jews, “parasites” identified with the bourgeoisie.

That the status of the Jews of Europe has been not only that of an oppressed people, but also of what Max Weber has called “pariah people” is a fact most clearly appreciated by those who had had practical experience of just how ambiguous is the freedom which emancipation has ensured, and how treacherous the promise of equality which assimilation has held out. In their position as social outcasts such men reflect the political status of an entire people. It is not therefore surprising that, out of their personal experience, Jewish poets, writers and artists should have been able to evolve the concept of *pariah* as a human type. 191

Bernard Lazare, for instance, deliberately wanted to be a pariah. At the time of the Dreyfus Affair, he recognized the nature of assimilation, describing it as a “*doctrine bâtarde*” as it would also be defined by Franz Kafka in *The Castle*, which presents the Jewish protagonist as the one who does not belong to the village and the people, nor to the castle rulers. 192 The “new” persecution that the reaction to emancipation had produced should not be considered the return of a presumed “eternal anti-Semitism”; it was rather the result of the history of the conflict between Jews and “gentiles” after emancipation, the effect of the failure of emancipation. But it was also the result of the inability of Jews to understand the transformation occurring in European politics. 193 For Jews, the loss of the world (worldlessness) had resulted in the inability to understand the real world of the exercise of power and politics.

In the Diaspora, the discrimination against the Jews by dominant Christianity had been for centuries the only means by which Jews were allowed to preserve themselves as a religion, a civilization, and a people. However, by making dissociation the basis of their survival, they had come to consider their existence always and only as an existence separate from the rest of the world, as the split between their mission and the inability to define the resources for political action consistent with it. The result of this rupture was the inability to know and understand the conditions of the new political reality
produced by emancipation and the opportunities it offered, as well as the new threats that it was producing. From that point onward, the Jewish body politic was dead and the people withdrew from the public stage of history.\(^{194}\)

The Jews lost their “awareness of the world” and, at the same time, they were increasingly integrated in the trade and financial mechanisms of the market economy, first, as court Jews, then, as international bankers in nineteenth-century Europe. Even if devoid of any political awareness, they transformed themselves into economic powers (“authorities,” writes Arendt) and were only concerned with preserving their positions of prestige (but subordinated to power) at the cost of ignoring the conditions of their poorer coreligionists. “Special” interlocutors of the modern state and apparently powerful in economic terms, they were safeguarded, as before emancipation, only by political protection, and the paradoxical result of the new legal position was that any class that came into conflict with the state as such became anti-Semitic precisely because the only group that seemed to represent the state were the Jews.\(^{195}\)

If, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Jews had found themselves in the middle of the conflict between the aristocratic classes and the centralizing monarchies, at the end of the nineteenth century they were, instead, involved in the clash between “the imperialist bourgeoisies” and the nation-state without, however, understanding the nature of the conflict nor having a political force on their side.

Politically short-sighted, during the nineteenth century the Jews also lost a great deal of economic power.\(^{196}\) Hence, paradoxically, they became the symbol of the capitalist society and the principle of trade and, therefore, the targets of the hatred directed at capitalism (while, in fact, they were losing interest in the financial activities that had led them to positions of prestige).\(^{197}\) At the height of the first major economic depression, the Dreyfus Affair was the first symptom of the catastrophe of the Enlightenment emancipation because it revealed how deeply hatred towards the Jews had grown in European society and in the homeland of democracy and of universal rights.

Arendt admitted that Zionism had been the most important political initiative developed by European Jews in response to the new persecutions. Nevertheless, the fundamental mistake of Zionism had been to assume the eternal nature of anti-Semitism in an eternal world of nations, thus separating Jewish history from that of Europe and the rest of humanity and even ignoring the role of European Jewry in the formation of nation-states.\(^{198}\) In other words, the Zionists were unable to understand the social and political
The only Jewish thinker equal to the task of providing a correct political response to anti-Semitism had been not Theodor Herzl but Bernard Lazare. Though he joined the Zionist cause, he soon left it and proposed the freedom struggle of the Jews as part of a process of national and social liberation of all the oppressed European peoples. Lazare sought a synthesis of the moral self-awareness of the Jewish people and socialist anticapitalism, in order to also attack the social roots of anti-Semitism. The Diaspora, not the nation-state, was Israel’s “mission,” and the Jews therefore had a duty to participate in the social liberation of all peoples and all the poor, as Sabbatai Zevi had dreamed.

Rahel Varnhagen, Henriette Herz, Dorothea Schlegel, and the Meyer sisters were women who were able to emancipate themselves from both Judaism and the oppressed, minority condition of women. They were able to do so thanks to their intellectual originality, by opposing prejudice and the social insult, going so far as to achieve personal success through an “autonomous encounter with the world.” Their self-emancipation showed not only that assimilation and legal emancipation had completely failed but also that the real “problem of assimilation had started only after the Enlightenment,” when “specifically modern anti-Semitism, the anti-Semitism directed against assimilated Jews and which is as old as their emancipation itself, had always reproached the Jews with being the bearers of the Enlightenment.” The crux of the matter was, once again, the relationship among the Jews, the Enlightenment, and bourgeois society: “Today in Germany it seems Jewish assimilation must declare its bankruptcy. The general social antisemitism and its official legitimation affects in the first instance assimilated Jews, who can no longer protect themselves through baptism or by emphasizing their differences from Eastern Judaism.” Hannah Arendt added that the activities of the Jewish financiers had anticipated the direction of European society’s economic development, and when money had become the new world power “the Jewish spirit had transformed itself into the practical stimulus of the Christian nations” while the commerce, banking, and financial activities of the Jews began to be eliminated by the capitalist economy. So Arendt pointed out the vast difference between the arguments of the anti-Semitic anticapitalists, like Toussenel and Proudhon, and Marx’s vision, critical of emancipation in the light of a true and social emancipation. Like Herder, Marx had understood the limits of legal emancipation as a form of “political” illusion.
Recently, an undated and unpublished work of extraordinary importance, called *Antisemitism*, has been found in the Arendt archive in New York. In this text, Arendt notes that the traditional argument against usury constituted the core of the attack on emancipation and assimilation, based on aristocratic values and the religious traditionalism hostile to the market economy and the constitutional state; in Germany, the reaction against emancipation developed especially after 1812, when the absolute Prussian monarchy lost the support of the aristocracy without obtaining the support of the bourgeoisie. In fact, the aristocracy was challenging the power of the monarchy while the bourgeoisie demanded the constitutional freedoms to ensure the success of its economic interests. The aristocracy and the bourgeoisie had not been able to reconcile their demands. In France, the same movement started from 1806 and Bonald’s polemic pamphlets.

The contempt of the *junkers* towards any status not based on the hereditary privilege was, therefore, also directed at the bourgeoisie and merchants at ease both in their homeland and in any other nation. This prevented an alliance between the two classes and aristocratic criticism of the liberal bourgeoisie. The latter was accused of causing the disintegration of the traditional society of the ancien régime because of its activities, and this, in turn, forced the middle classes to react by diverting social disapproval toward the Jews, projecting on to the Jews the negative image of commerce depicted by the aristocratic representations of the world. The contradiction between the aristocratic attack against the bourgeois and financial classes and the development of bourgeois hatred for its own activities, would have been definitively resolved with the projection of this hatred onto the Jews, who would never have thought they would be considered the representatives of the “disruptive bourgeoisie.” The false equation between profit and usury, and therefore the correlation of the “bourgeoisie” with the Jews, became the tropes of the anti-capitalist anti-Semitic reaction of social anti-Semitism.

Paradoxically, however, this was happening when the practice of lending at interest had virtually disappeared or survived only in a few areas untouched by the modern transformation of credit, such as Hesse and Alsace, of which Louis de Bonald himself had written. Furthermore, the status of creditors of the monarchy, once enjoyed by major financiers like the Rothschilds, had been superseded. The former tax collectors had become investment bankers, and the ancient representations of usury served perfectly for the falsifying propaganda against the new business practices.
The traditional theological polemic against usury should therefore be considered—Arendt concludes—the source of all anti-Semitic arguments:

What is amazing is the total correlation between the description of the nascent commercial capitalism, of the banks and the entrepreneurs, and the features of anti-Semitism. . . . The origins of German anti-Semitism, the defamation of the bourgeoisie by the aristocracy, continued to strongly determine the history of modern Jewry. The more closely anti-Semitic argumentation was linked with old feudalism. . . . This shows that all the anti-Semitic arguments were of feudal origin.²⁰⁷
Let us go back to Bonald’s pamphlet “Sur les juifs.” Alexandre Koyré has provided the most incisive judgment on the nature of Bonald’s political culture and his criticism of Jewish emancipation:

One finds de Bonald’s ideas with a modern coating or disguise in Auguste Comte, Taine, Maurras and in so many others: they are the same ideas Catholic literature has always given us. . . . What, instead, Louis de Bonald could not have foreseen is the fact that, a hundred years after his death, the representatives—or rather the would-be representatives—of democratic thought would have proclaimed the inexistence, or almost, of the individual and the primacy of the social sphere; they would have sought in society’s forms and traditions the source of our morality and the categories of our thought; they would have subjected “the abstract atomism and flat individualism” of official democracy to a virulent criticism.¹

Robert Nisbet for instance has confirmed and shown the reception of many traditionalist categories and, in particular, the thought of Louis de Bonald, in fin-de-siècle sociology and, especially, in the sociological school of Émile Durkheim, in which the role of the economic doctrine of Saint-Simon was decisive. The latter had, in fact, been defined by Durkheim as “the founder of socialism,”² and we know that, under the influence of his own young secretary, Auguste Comte, Saint-Simon appreciated the organic social theory of Bonald and other intransigent Catholic writers. During those same years, traces of Bonald’s neo-Christian controversy against economic individualism
and constitutional principles are also evident in the Marquis de La Tour du Pin’s articles in the newspaper *L’Association Catholique* and in the writings of the corporatists of the 1880s and 1890s:

The growth of the proletariat, the break-up of families, the disaffection of workers toward the entrepreneurs, the instability of relationships, the decline of professional ability, the uncertainty of the exploitation of resources, the evidence of economic decline after there had already been a moral decline; the most pernicious phenomena of social disintegration appear in different forms, but reveal an identical cause: the breakdown of the *liens sociaux*.

What is absolutely striking is that the corporatist project of the Catholic La Tour du Pin was perfectly in line with Durkheim’s reflections on the need to introduce the corporations into the republic. They would have been institutions of “professional morality,” certainly not unlike that of the Viennese Catholic Social Christians. But the latter were also the vanguard of social anti-Semitism in the Habsburg Empire.

In a letter dated July 1, 1895, Monsignor Agliardi tried to exonerate the Viennese movement of the charge of racial anti-Semitism, but he was thus revealing the deep structure of the beliefs of the church hierarchy: “They are [anti-Semites] not in the sense of racial anti-Semitism, as in Germany, but of economic anti-Semitism. This is more than legitimate, because it is against usury.” Legitimized by positions like this, common in the higher ranks of the church, anti-Semitism became an organic part of Catholic European movements and, as such, fully recognized and appreciated.

As early as the late 1860s, the Catholic controversy had become more virulent. After the Paris Commune, the uncompromising rejection of “communism,” opposed by the church’s social doctrine, became stronger, but the main battle front was the inexorable process of secularization, the establishment of the constitutional state, and the expansion of liberal governments. However, these things were present not only in Protestant countries (with the start of the Bismarckian Kultur Kampf in the late 1870s) but also in Catholic ones, including Belgium, France (with the repercussions of “anti-Catholic” school laws and “persecutions”), and also Italy, where the “revolution” had ended with the sacrilegious military strike at the heart of Christianity. Far from resisting the rise of modern anti-Semitic doctrines, Catholic diplomats, writers, priests, and journalists helped promulgate many anti-Semitic libels about the
Jews, and even the supreme authority in the church gave them the sacred imprimatur of the Vatican. In 1898, for instance, *L'Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican’s daily newspaper (founded in 1861) complained, in a generic reference, about the Jew, who had abandoned “himself recklessly and heedlessly to the innate passion of his race, which is essentially usurious and pushy.”

Liberalism was, therefore, the engine of “modern civilization” and Freemasonry the political party of the liberal revolution, materialism, and the self-regulating market. On the whole, Freemasonry appeared to the Jesuits of *La Civilta Cattolica* definitely “Jewish . . . whence it follows that, as every Mason is essentially liberal and therefore in some way Jewish and certainly anti-Christian,” that sect was undoubtedly organizing the “anti-Christian war of the Masonic community, but which could be called Jewish.” In fact, the fathers had no difficulty in abandoning the circumspection shown in Monsignor Agliardi’s letter, nor in adding to the accusation of “anti-Christian war” the new racial frameworks proposed by anthropology and physiology; in considering race and religion together, “it is therefore established that Judaism always remains a foreign and hostile force in the countries where it has taken root: furthermore, it tends to overwhelm the inhabitants and dominate them through its financial power and usurious banks.”

The powerful reaction to the collapse of the alliance between throne and altar certainly did not stop with the French and European Restoration of the ancien regime monarchies, and neo-Christian thought in the first half of the century indeed renewed its attacks against the “stubborn Jewish nation,” accusing it of “particularism.” But no one would have imagined that the texts of Catholic writers or the pages of David F. Strauss, Ernest Renan, or Karl von Hase could antedate the “Germanic Christ” of Houston Stewart Chamberlain; it was primarily Protestant writers and German nationalists, such as Paul de Lagarde and Julius Langbehn, who rejected the possibility of integrating the Jews in the Christian nation. In Catholic areas—from Austria to Poland—Catholic political movements turned to their rural origins and the traditionalist economy of the countryside areas to counter the church’s loss of influence in the cities; the Jews were thus transformed into the popular symbol of capitalist modernization, urban robbery, and the unregulated market.

Also in France, the Catholic agricultural laborers and peasant unions, jealous of local autonomies and led by the owners, were markedly denominational, antistate, and anti-Semitic. Their propaganda was directed against the capitalists as “fat cats” (*gros*) and the Jews as “big noses” (*gros nez*), and in fact, in the documents of Henri de Gailhard-Bancel, the founder of agricultural
unions, the accusations of usury against merchants and bankers, the “drinkers of Christian blood,” were more and more frequent. It was not pure chance that Xavier Vallat, the future commissioner for the Jewish issue in Vichy, declared himself an admirer of the Union Centrale des Syndicats Agricoles and its leader. The agricultural unions, with their initiatives for the safeguarding of the countryside, local autonomy, and the traditional economy, therefore constituted the most robust social background of the new anti-Semitism embodied by Édouard Drumont, then by Charles Maurras. But the rejection of the modern economy, the antimodern and antiurban traditionalist culture, and in particular hostility toward financial capitalism were also common to many socialist supporters of a social economy of small producers.

For the same reason, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon was elected the maître-à-penser of the anti-Semitic nationalists and syndicalists who, in 1912, would have initiated the collaborative experiment of the “Cercle Proudhon.” As early as the second half of the nineteenth century, his vision of society as a continuous process for reconciling modern economic development and the traditional peasant world, his proposal to establish the Banque du Peuple as a financial support for associations of mutuality and cooperation, his propaganda against the stock exchange and the “féodalité industrielle et financière” had also been shared by Catholic circles, as well as organizations of peasants, artisans, laborers, merchants, and members of the middle classes who were hostile to big business, the centralized state, and politics. His idea of justice had points of contact with that of many Catholic writers because it constituted a moral idea of solidarity in social relations and at the same time the principle of “equilibrium in the universe.”

Proudhon’s anti-clerical positions did not prevent the socialist thinker from Besançon from considering Christianity the most important form of social movement since the beginning of what Proudhon termed the “messianic age: the long transition of more than nineteen centuries initiated by Kabbalists, Essenes and evangelists . . ., the more or less mystical statement of the conditions of a radical reform of social relations, as well as the union of all peoples in a single faith.” The Nazarene was not therefore a “Samaritan, or a Pharisee, or a Jew” because, on the contrary he fought against “Jewish particularism and every paganism” in order to effect a moral reform of customs based on the principles of égalité parmi les hommes et de l’immortalité de l’âme. The man of Galilee was “a socialist.” For a follower of Proudhon, the Italian revolutionary syndicalist Paolo Orano, the Nazarene remained instead “a Jewish rabbi, a foreigner in the Roman Empire.”
But the socialism of Jesus certainly could not be Jewish. Like the Saint-Simonians before him, Proudhon preached the application of the Christian law of brotherhood and turned it into a “law of social justice” and, in contrast with “the despotic tendencies of communism,” at the same time he made it the premise of the mutual aid system, which would have represented “the application of justice to the political economy.” Despite being hostile to ultramontane traditionalists and eclectic neo-spiritualists like Cousin, he did not hesitate to share his generation’s general admiration for Bossuet. As Françoise Mélonio has written, in the early nineteenth century “Bossuet was everywhere.”

The problem that arises in reconstructing the genealogy of anti-Jewish anticapitalism is whether the anti-Semites’ decision to raise Proudhon to the level of “master” really corresponds with his thought. There is no doubt that Drumont, in the famous interview with the daily newspaper _Le Figaro_, to mark the publication of _La fin d’un monde_, used Proudhon’s formula “property is theft.” Just as it is certain that the anti-Semitic nationalists and revolutionary syndicalists of the Cercle Proudhon used the prestige of his name, which was still high among the workers’ organizations even at the end of the nineteenth century. There is, however, an explicit attitude of hostility toward the Jews in a page of the _Carnets_, which was written as a reaction to Marx’s attack on the _Philosophie de la Misère_ and can be dated to the time when Proudhon was planning to write two articles for _Le Peuple_ as a response that was never published. The notes are nevertheless unequivocal:

Jews. Write an article against that race, which poisons everything while spreading everywhere without ever integrating itself with any people. Demand their expulsion from France, except for those who are married to French women; abolish synagogues, do not admit them to any employment, pursue finally the abolition of their religion. It’s not pure chance that Christians have defined them as deicides.

I do not know of public positions of this tone by Proudhon, and it therefore remains an open question as to how his undoubted hostility to the Jews was received by militant socialists and others. Drumont, for example, in his “testament” attacked the Jews using Proudhon’s formula, adding it to the accusations that were circulating widely in the pages of _La Croix_, but it is difficult to distinguish these traces from the crystallization of other categories, for example, from the implicit reference to the passages from the chapter “In the
Jewish Cemetery in Prague," in Hermann Goedsche’s novel Biarritz (1868), which Drumont had translated in the July 1881 issue of Le Contemporaine with the title “Le Discours du Rabbin.” And it is significant that Le testament d’un antisémite, published by Drumont in 1891, has been considered the work of a “Proudhonian” and a “socialist.”¹⁹

The most plausible hypothesis is that the nationalists of Action Française attributed to Proudhon the ideas and categories that had in fact been developed by Drumont. They integrated, for example, the old paradigm of the Jewish conspiracy in a new explicitly corporatist and anti-parliamentary political platform that remained unchanged until World War II; over time, both the espionage episode in which Captain Dreyfus had been involved and the sudden defeat suffered by the Republic in June 1940 would have been interpreted in terms of a Jewish conspiracy. But in 1914, the decision of the German Social Democrats (and their Jewish leaders) to support the “aggression of the Reich against France” had also been attributed to the Jewish conspiracy by journalists and pamphleteers who were members of Action Française. The same applied to the agreements in 1919 among President Wilson of the United States, the German Jewish industrialist Walther Rathenau, and “the agent of the Anglo-German juiverie, Aristide Briand,” which led to a peace agreement designed to block the heaviest French war-reparation claims. This may well explain why the two French translators of The Protocols, Mons. Jouin and Urbain Gohier, strongly approved of the organization led by Charles Maurras. Cardinal Billot himself, in 1922, went so far as to declare that “against liberalism and democracy, there was nothing better than Maurras.”²⁰

The fundamental thesis of The Protocols was therefore familiar to French and Central European public opinion long before the translation of the famous fake.

Social anti-Semitism became more closely tied to anti-parliamentary corporatism in the decade before the Great War. In this operation, there were, most probably, some Catholic writers close to Action Française or committed activists in the monarchist organization who played a decisive role. Let us return therefore to the texts of La Tour du Pin.

The corporations that La Tour du Pin had in mind should have been called “corporate assets” and become genuine owners’ corporations, exactly like those which, half a century later, the Italian fascist economist Ugo Spirito would have hoped to see. But anti-parliamentary corporatism was not only the foundation for an alternative to democratic parliamentary representation, it was also a platform shared by Catholic anti-Semites, who saw in the con-
The Revolution has banned the corporation. It is therefore necessary to restore and rebuild the corporation under current conditions, according to the law of charity, which can only be a law of freedom . . . ; to include in the same association and union of corporations, according to the bond of charity, the employers and workers of big business . . . . Harmel's Christian corporation; the Société de Saint-Joseph defender of Christian labor (in which Father Ludovic had taken such good care of the owners' interests, concerning himself first and foremost with the workers' interests); the Cercles Catholiques des Ouvriers; employers' associations . . . ; professional associations, bringing together workers in arts and crafts: all these works . . . show us the way forward. . . . Among the different forms the association can take in the workers' life, the corporation is the most comprehensive, the most powerful, and the one that best represents a man in all his industrial activities. . . . The corporation of the Christian era was indeed a brotherhood formed under the protection of a saint, and gathered around the altar, where they celebrated the Christian sacrifice: it gave the worker, through faith and charity, the nourishment of spiritual life which served to console him. . . . Today, however, the hierarchical order should be reconstructed in both private and public relations, which means organizing the corporation. 23

The text shows that almost a century after the shock provoked by the establishment of the modern political rights of citizenship the reaction was still very strong. Corporatism was conceived as a system of social integration and control of the market. But it was also perceived as the reversal, awaited for a century, of individualism, as the cancellation of the Enlightenment and the
rights of citizenship that had guaranteed the emancipation of the Jews, as an antipolitical alternative to democratic parliamentary representation. Corporatism would finally build the new spiritual power, which Bonald, de Maistre, and Comte had striven to construct.

It therefore remains certain that, in any kind of professional activity, there is a corresponding right specific to that profession...: the corporative regime is a system of representation of both rights and interests, through public expression (public expression is here taken to mean the expression of the representation, devolved to one of the state bodies—an advisory or deliberative body—especially assigned this function...). In the parliamentary system, the representation of opinions is through universal suffrage...; today a man is worth as much as another man, everyone brings an innate right to absolute sovereignty, and may delegate it to whomsoever he wishes, to exercise it in his name and under an indefinite mandate; in the professional system instead, what needs to be sought in the common interest is competence... Between the idea of election and that of representation there really is an abyss. 24

The political organization that, from the beginning of the twentieth century, supported with greater determination the corporative alternative to democracy, even going so far as to propose a parliament of the corporative councils of agriculture, industry, and commerce, was therefore Action Française, a nationalist and Catholic group that declared that it followed the old teachings of Bonald and Comte. And, in fact, it proposed that the corporations should be new state institutions under public law. This is exactly what, a few years later, would have been put forward by the jurists and theoreticians of the Italian Nationalist Association, Alfredo Rocco and Luigi Federzoni who joined the Fascist Party after World War I. The corporations would have restored, together with the provinces and communities, the liens sociaux of the old monarchical system. It was with these that Maurras, Pujo, Rocco, Federzoni, and other nationalist leaders thought of replacing democracy with the authoritarian state “organized within and externally strong, as it had in fact been under the ancien régime.” 25

The first important political work published by Charles Maurras was L’idée de décentralisation, which he published in 1898 (a year before the founding of Action Française) and dedicated to Auguste Comte, Ernest Renan, Frédéric Le Play, and Hyppolite Taine. The title page read: “à la doctrine de nos maî-
tress” and recognized the author’s debt to the positivist and Saint-Simonian school.  

The decentralization of the state, the reestablishment of the regions, and 
the optimization of the local and provincial cultural autonomies were defined 
by Maurras as the key points of a strategy of moral reconstruction of Euro-
pean society, which was seen as being in a state of crisis because of democracy 
and the phenomena of “anomie” caused by industrialization. But the social 
alternative to the market was made up of the corporation, and in this Maur-
ras was surprisingly in tune with the ideas of Emile Durkheim and the jurists 
closest to his views (the theoreticians of “social law,” Léon Duguit, Raoul de la 
Grasserie, and Charles Benoist).  

At that time, they were also developing projects of regional decentraliza-
tion and reform of the representative chamber in accordance with the cri-
teria of the professional representation of interests. Without calling into 
question universal suffrage, Benoist, for example, states that he agrees with 
the criticism, made by Action Française, of representation based on politi-
cal individualism; after the World War I he joined the nationalist movement, 
maintaining that the basis of the dialogue between members of Durkheim’s 
sociological school and the nationalists of Action Française lay in their com-
mon devotion to the teachings of Auguste Comte.  

We can explain this unexpected convergence by remembering that, in the 
“restless and disturbed” late nineteenth century, the reaction against the En-
lightenment and rationalism was developing also from within positivist phi-
losophy. And Eugène-Melchior de Vogüé and Gabriel Tarde, for instance, 
confronted by the outcomes of what they defined “scientistic dogmatism” 
and what seemed to them the symptoms of the breakdown of social cohesion, 
caused by moral relativism, called for “an action program for the family, so-
ciety, education and the homeland.” The anti-Semites Maurras and Daudet 
followed the same line.  

This is a confirmation that the obsession with decadence was widespread 
and also fed on anxiety about the physical degeneration of the population, the 
consequences of diseases and “vices” such as nicotine addiction and syphilis, 
and “hereditary genetic defects.” But diseases and social ills were considered 
the biological effects of the moral corruption that was ravaging modern ur-
ban society. This moral corruption was identified with mass democracy, un-
bridled competition, economic individualism, and the Jewish spirit. 

The “decadence” that haunted Maurras was, for instance, embodied above 
all in democracy, and the Dreyfus Affair became for him the symbol of the
war between the droits de l’homme and the principles of authority, truth, and national unity. In the name of “French truth,” Le Baron de Montesquiou, Louis Dimier, Jacques Bainville, Frédéric Amouretti, Maurice Pujo, Henri Vaugeois, Charles Maurras, and Gabriel Syveton considered themselves the representatives of national unity and

of a new Boulangism, more aware, however, of its principles. . . . If the party of the traitor Dreyfus took as an emblem of its destructive enterprise the flag of the “Droits de l’Homme,” Action Française replied with the merciless criticism of such rights. . . . The strength on which we counted made us despise electoral action and, in general, legal means. These, in our eyes, represented the impotence, the slowness, and a practical tribute to the principles of the adversary. The coup de main was to replace the legal means: we thought of it as a surprise blow, the felicitous outcome of street agitation, the effect of a (from a high level) military and civil complicity.

So the anti-Semites of Action Française did not therefore exclude the “revolutionary” paths, namely the coup d’état.

At the same time, Louis Dimier managed to get an audience with Pope Pius X in order to convince him to oppose by every means the decision of a moderate French Catholic party, Action Libérale, to accept the democratic system; Dimier, instead, wanted to convince the pontiff to support the positions of the Assumptionist Fathers and the Congregation of the Sacred Heart in their struggle against the theses of the modernists Alfred Loisy, Paul Lejay, and Joseph Turnel. However, the anti-Semites were not as interested in theological confrontation as they were in the political stakes: “authority and discipline, rather than searching for an ultimate truth, which seemed much less interesting.” For the militants of Action Française, the modernist phenomenon did not represent a heresy, but rather the danger of the justification and legitimation of Catholic adherence to democratic politics and constitutional pluralism. So, thanks to the support of many conservative newspapers—including Le Soleil, Le Gaulois, La Libre Parole, L’Autorité and Le Temps—the anti-Semites could reach a much wider cross-section of public opinion than from the lecture halls of Parisian universities or the pages of traditionalist literary periodicals.

Maurras proclaimed himself a “follower aware of the doctrine of Saint-Simon [and] a mathematical philosopher, born in the South, who, through
mathematics, had found evidence that, in reality, the individual is not a social unit, but that instead, the first social unit is the family.\textsuperscript{40} But he declared that he was also a “physicist philosopher . . . who in his own discoveries only avails himself of the evidence of the empirical sciences. The first of these philosophers does not believe either in God or the devil. The other . . . is a devout Christian.”\textsuperscript{41} Socialism and Christian nationalism, theology, and science—he continued—could serve to combat the “truly mortal evil inflicted upon us, since 1789, by democratic leveling and conformism born from centralization” and to build a new form of despotism or a restoration of the monarchy, which should not, however, mean a return to absolutist centralism.\textsuperscript{42} Rather, it should be the opportunity to construct a modern authoritarian system of corporations and autonomous regions, able to consolidate the country’s social and moral cohesion.

The first article of “Action Française” states: what needs to be done is to reconstitute France as a society, to restore the idea of the homeland and renew the chain of our traditions, prolonging them and adapting them to the circumstances of our age. That is to say, to make republican France a state which would be well organized internally and strong externally, as it had been under the ancien régime.\textsuperscript{43}

Maurras aimed at a modern tyranny that relied on the political synthesis “of two pure truths, the socialist and the Catholic traditionalist.”\textsuperscript{44} I stress the significance of the use of the attribute “socialist” in this context. At the time of the Vichy regime, in recapitulating his political journey, Maurras would yet again return to the original sin, the disruption of 1789:

On the whole, the Revolution had destroyed many things, but what it had built in their place? Had it not perhaps actually prevented any construction? By asking ourselves these questions, we turned once again to the masters who had already confronted, more or less, the same problem. There was, therefore, no reason to despair about the possible revenge of the spirit over the disorder of ideas and the anarchy of beings: the genius and the reason of France had never resigned themselves and continued to dream of the discipline that was missing. . . . Would a thought of Bonald and a thesis of de Maistre attract fewer listeners or readers than one of Béranger’s songs or a sentence of Chateaubriand? The difficulty, however, increased even further with Auguste Comte . . . and the austere search
of Le Play. . . . According to the Social Contract, or the Declaration of the Rights of Man, revolutionary politics is based upon the maxim men are born free and equal before the law, but neither the mathematics professor Auguste Comte nor the Vicomte de Bonald, a landowner, a deputy and academician, nor the engineer Frédéric Le Play had ever admitted that anything good could come from what had begun as freedom and equality. None of them had allowed their followers to believe it, and all of them, instead, had countered those principles with the opposite value, which for them represented the first article in the science of society. In other words, they had considered, of fundamental importance, the necessity that derived from the essence of things and not the will of men; authority, not freedom; hierarchy, not equality; the family, not the individual. Even before the rights of man comes his duty to comply with his own condition in life.45

For Maurras, in the end, Vichy represented the possibility and the great historic opportunity of permanently closing the disastrous cycle that had begun over a hundred and fifty years earlier, with the irruption into politics of natural law and the rights of citizenship. Maurras declared he was always in tune with the proposed reconstitution of the corporations advanced by the Catholics Charles Périn and René de La Tour du Pin, and he therefore enthusiastically supported the federalist projects of the antidemocratic traditionalists Frédéric Mistral and Joaquin Balaguer.

He even managed to arouse interest in his corporatist ideas in some representatives of the labor movement: at the end of the nineteenth century, a dialogue between trade unionists near to the revolutionary syndicalists and corporatist nationalists had taken place in the pages of the newspaper La Cocarde, founded by Caroline Rémy de Gurbhard (known as Séverine) and Gabriel Mermeix. The anarchist Ferdinand Pelloutier, the socialist Benoît Malon, the monarchist Charles Maurras, and the nationalist Maurice Barrès had discussed how to counter the centralizing bureaucracy of the state and the policy of integrating the trade unions pursued by the republican governments, and they had concluded that a goal common to revolutionary syndicalists and Catholic nationalists was the defense of local communities, French traditions, and trade union autonomy. The agreement, however, lasted only for a short time.46

It was Barrès who, from the time of his first book, Culte du moi, had emphasized the value of local tradition and the cultural heritages: in the novel
Un homme libre, he had outlined his thesis on the “soul of Lorraine” and had made it the premise of his adherence to political action of the decentralizing federalists, thus contributing to an original synthesis of the federalist and nationalist programs. “The cosmopolitan intellectuals,” wrote Maurras, had even tried to take over federalism, and some nationalists had identified federalism with separatism (whereas it was the exact opposite) and therefore they had fought against it. The interventions of Barrès made us understand that the Federalist Party actually identified itself with the national one . . . and with territorial patriotism. The ideal France, cherished by certain orators, thus finally transformed itself into the idea of the real France, made up of families, communes and provinces.47

According to Maurras, Maurice Barrès had laid the foundations of the new nationalist politics, extolling “the sense of the earth, of blood and of its dead.”48 Barrès, together with Paul Adam (the author of Le mystère des foules), exalted “the mystique of old, Christian and rural France,” and, as a “Boulangist” deputy of the “socialist and revisionist” Committee of Nancy, he had fought since 1889 for an antidemocratic revision of the constitutional laws to strengthen the executive power and for a program of corporate social measures.49 So, in the character of Professor Paul Bouteiller, the protagonist of the novel Les déracinés, Barrès had portrayed the republican philosopher Paul Renouvier, whom Maurras mocked as “steeped in Enlightenment dogmatism,” stigmatizing his “abstract and democratic morality” that turned the young into people totally uprooted from their community of origin.50

Many Catholic, nationalist, and socialist journalists—including Jean-Camille Dumonteil, Gauthier de Clagny, Marius Martin, Antide Boyer—lined up alongside Barrès in the fight against the Jews, immigration, and foreign labor.51 And his watchwords found a large receptive audience, even among socialist leaders. Barrès had in fact emphasized the need to abandon the “vision of socialism tied to the rights of man” and to inaugurate a new strategy of national socialism.52 If socialism aimed at the social reappropriation of the wealth produced by the nation, it had to show the way to an economy once again “under the control of the French race,” and this would mean taking the “public wealth” away from the most important Jewish banks, and from the syndicat anonyme of “Jewish capitalists” who had taken, according to him, “total control of French labor and savings.”53 And even before the explosion of Boulanger’s popularity among the socialists, the failure of the
Union Générale Bank, founded with Catholic capital, had already triggered a violent reaction against the “maneuvers of Jewish finance,” which were allegedly responsible for that collapse. Thus, as early as the beginning of the 1880s, anti-Jewish anticapitalism was able to accommodate the widespread social unrest among the small traders in difficulty because of the processes of concentration in the retail sector, the farmers and wine growers affected by the crisis. This favored the most subversive groups, such as Paul Déroulède’s Ligue des Patriotes and the anti-Semitic groups of Édouard Drumont, Jules Guérin, and Marquis de Morès.

In a letter of April 1890, the socialist leader Paul Lafargue had explained to Friedrich Engels that the popular movement had grown through the support for General Boulanger’s political plan for an authoritarian revision of the republican parliamentary system and was a more complex phenomenon than a simple chauvinisme, solely concerned with regaining Alsace and Lorraine, lost in the war of 1870. Lafargue also felt that much greater importance should be given to the aspects of the revolt induced by the crisis of small traders and the suffering of the working classes in difficulty because of the long depressive cycle that had started in 1873.

Large sections of the people had felt well-represented by Boulanger because of the exasperation at their economic suffering and, between 1887 and 1889, the representatives of these social classes looked favorably on the new alliance between the socialists (in particular the followers of Auguste Blanqui such as Henri Rochefort, Ernest Granger, or Ernst Roche) and the “Boulangists.” The jaunes trade unions and the Ligue des Patriotes also represented a political reference, and its leader, Paul Déroulède, had in fact defined a platform for cooperation between capital and labor in the name of the tariff protection of national interests and the defense of “national labor” from competition from immigrant foreign manpower. In fact, Déroulède’s political platform was not too different from the plans of Naquet’s “bien-être populaire” and the plans for workers’ credit developed by Barrès.

Certainly, these platforms revealed an inadequate understanding of modern financial and industrial mechanisms, but, anyway, they could speak to the gut feelings of the pétits, in need of scapegoats and simple explanations for the economic depression that unceasingly afflicted them. Moreover, the explanation of the crisis in terms of a Jewish conspiracy against the national economy and national resources could be an effective representation of the enemy: tax relief, banks providing credit for small businesses, tariff protectionism, agrarian and industrial corporatism, the exclusion of foreigners from public expenditure, and anti-Semitic policies were, at the same time, the more eas-
ily understandable points of anti-Jewish propaganda and a national-socialist platform purged of internationalism, cosmopolitanism, and the Enlightenment but not hostile to the private ownership of the means of production.56

So, the “revision of republican values,” with which, from the end of the 1870s, Jules Lemaitre, Paul Bourget, and Paul Déroulède concurred was transformed, with Barrès and Drumont, into blunt and violent antiparliamentarianism; as early as December 1887, Déroulède’s Ligue was able to prevent the election of Jules Ferry as president of the Republic by besieging Parliament with its demonstrators.57 In 1898, the Ligue was the most important electoral organization of all the anti-Dreyfus deputies, as well as the reference point of the most hard-line military commanders—General George-Gabriel de Pellieux and Hervé—against the upholders of Dreyfus’s innocence.

This new social anti-Semitism was shared by socialists in Boulanger’s movement—Barrès, Henri Rochefort, Ernest Granger, Ernest Roche, Francis Laur—and provided the general with a popular and proletarian base: as Drumont wrote, “The truth is that at no time and in no country has the Jewish question ever been a religious issue, but always and everywhere an economic and social question.”58 Moreover, the leader of the anti-Semitic action squads—Antoine-Amedée Morès—added that “the necessary social revolution” would be triggered “by the alliance between the workers’ trade union organization and the anti-Semitic movement.”59 This also explains why the anti-Semitic platforms of the 1890s, after the outbreak of the Dreyfus Affair, had strong anticapitalist economic and social connotations and were expressions of a “socialism” that actually aimed at integrating the proletariat in the national economic community. In other words, the anti-Semitic platforms were expressions of a national socialism popularized by numerous newspapers such as Drumont’s La Libre Parole, Guérin’s L’Antijuif, Rochefort’s L’Intransigeant, Barrès’s Le Courrier de l’Est, and Emmanuel Gallian’s L’Anti-Youtre. They also expressed the positions of traditional anti-Judaism, focusing on the “immense secret society dedicated to usury”—thus wrote Abbot Chabauty as late as 1882—and tried to restore the social popular and plebeian dimension of the message of Bonald, Toussenel, and Proudhon.60 And Benoît Malon (who claimed to be a follower of Proudhon but, in 1886, had appreciated some of the famous pages of La France juive) had admitted that, within socialism, Albert Regnard’s anti-Semitic hatred was a legitimate point of view.61

During the Boulangist period, Morès had been the head of the Anti-Semitic League, but the general’s defeat, in 1889, also led to a crisis for the organization and Morès’s role when Drumont began to use a political style
much more in tune with the socialist parlance. So Drumont’s newspaper, _La Libre Parole_, replaced Morès’s Ligue as the anti-Semitic reference point, but in 1897, Guérin reorganized Morès’s old association merging it with the Ligue des Patriotes, and then Déroulède’s group was responsible for the most violent demonstrations and the pogroms that erupted in February 1898 in many French cities: Dieppe, Nancy, Luneville, Lyon, Bordeaux, and Marseilles. This new dynamism, founded on violent action, would have led the younger anti-Semites under the leadership of Guérin and Déroulède, relegating Drumont to a less prestigious position, and revealed the new tendency of anti-Jewish anticapitalism to explode into violent action. The Catholic “bonne presse” also did not refrain from guaranteeing its support for various bills aimed at discriminating against the Jews in public administration.

A few years later, at the beginning of the century, the protagonists of the new anti-Semitism became the most dynamic leaders of Action Française. State corporatism constituted the new form of this anti-Jewish nationalism, and one of the most intelligent exponents of Action Française, George Valois, presented some corporative collaboration projects between employers and trade unions at the annual conferences of Action Française with the support of the economist Firmin Bacconnier (the founder of the periodical _L’Accord Social_) and of Charles Maurras. This change of perspective, in relation to the populist anti-Semitism of the 1880s, emerged more strongly toward the end of the Dreyfus case, in the face of the disappointment caused by the left-wing coalition government when the anti-Semitic nationalists in fact sought an alliance with the “anti-democratic socialists,” in the name of their common hostility to the republic and to the policies of the radical and social democratic bloc des gauches. The prototype of the corporative dictatorship then became the model of a new anti-Jewish system.

Louis de Bonald, Auguste Comte and Hippolyte Taine remained the guiding stars of the corporative thinking of Action Française throughout the 1930s:

In short, we French employers and French workers lose or gain together: and every war between employers’ confederations and trade unions must find its necessary limit in the awareness that there is a common fate, which depends on the national common denominator. . . . If we have to fight among ourselves, let’s at least not do so to the point where the struggle risks becoming mortal: it is vital, instead, to suspend the hostilities and help each other and unite. We must add, to the horizontal organizations of owners, technicians, clerks and laborers, comparable to the lines
of terrestrial latitude, the vertical organizations, in order to communicate with one another, organize regular contact and exchanges of opinion necessary for the nature and purpose of our industrial activities: merged in a longitudinal social scale, able to overcome and cut through the thick layers of mutual hostility and the ignorance of the common labors of the country’s economy. Our internal divisions would lead to the total ruin of the “French House,” but instead, it is necessary to unite its converging forces.

A superior organism of this type will certainly become, easily or with difficulty, a fraternal organism. The unity of the trade unions will remain close and direct, but it will be flanked by another union, equally long-lasting, comparable to those territorial unions that, in the body and soul of the same country, unite the leaders and those who are led. This will be the Corporation . . . and, side by side with trade union assets and corporate wealth, there will also emerge the wealth of the family, with the aim of giving security and durability to a consolidated order. Thus, the proletariat will disappear, and the worker will cease to wander in an alien environment, becoming a citizen and a bourgeois of the city: a workers’ bourgeoisie that must and can continue the development of the old peasant bourgeoisie . . . and incorporate the worker in society, in accordance with the wish formulated by Auguste Comte.65

A socialism that would refuse the corporatist strategy would be destined to remain a prisoner of the “democratic definition of equality,” incapable therefore of offering a solution to the problem of national brotherhood while, as Maurras wrote in 1937,

the corporation, instead, does not infringe the essential principle of a logical and honest socialism, but only that of democratic politics. . . . What is, in effect, fascism? A socialism freed from democracy and a trade unionism free from the obstacles to which the class struggle in Italy had subjected labor. A methodical and felicitous determination to clasp in a single “bundle” all the human factors of national production . . . , to merge trade unions in corporations, . . . and to incorporate the proletariat in the state’s hereditary and traditional activities.66

Maurras always remained steadfastly tied to his plan of building a corporative system dominated and guided by the “spiritual power” invoked by Comte.
Catholicism . . . will regain all the honors that are its due . . . and certainly the current mediocre regime will come to an end, but it is equally evident that the most complete freedom will have to reign over France: instead of hindering scientific and philosophical research, the State should support it and help it . . . After all, on the solid ground of organizing and directing society there cannot be a conflict between the men of religion and the men of science. Catholic politics excludes the revolutionary ideology, which is the horror of the positivists, as does positivist politics, whose sympathies and affinities with Catholicism are obvious.\textsuperscript{67}

Maurras did not use the romantic myth of the “great living organism,” as Barrès had done, to counter the heirs of the Enlightenment and natural law; instead, he turned to the positive lesson of Comte’s science: society, family, and corporation are, according to him, “data of nature,” but the meaning he gives to “nature” is strongly influenced by his Catholic and Saint-Simonian legacies. So he was, therefore, reproposing the conception of history of the traditionalist Catholics but in the context of a purely positivist methodology according to which even political choices had to be made “not on the basis of tastes and passions” or metaphysical abstractions, but by following the scientific method. This would be done in order to replace democratic politics, which presupposes the “reason” of the philosophes, with the paradigm of “natural politics,” based on Bonald’s formula: \textit{raisonnement et histoire}. The same essential skills “needed to deal with chemistry” are necessary to govern public affairs: therefore, science must become the holder of the spiritual power once exercised by the church.

In the ideal dialogue with Comte, Maurras took up the thesis advanced by Ernest Renan in \textit{L’Avenir de la science}: democracy “must yield to science the task of organizing humanity.”\textsuperscript{68} Comte’s “Plan de travaux scientifiques nécessaires pour réorganiser la société” (1822; published in 1824 together with the \textit{Catéchisme des industriels} with the signature of Saint-Simon),\textsuperscript{69} remained for Maurras the paradigm of modern knowledge because, for him, Comte had taught that only science could define the proper balance between progress and order.\textsuperscript{70} This balance could overcome the conflict between the heirs of the Enlightenment and the counter-Enlightenment,\textsuperscript{71} and the era of spiritual disorder would then end.\textsuperscript{72} In fact, since the drafting of “Dictateur ou Roi” (1899), the fundamental reference point for Maurras had been precisely the \textit{Cours de philosophie positive}.\textsuperscript{73}

Certainly—admitted Maurras—the most elaborate model of political theory governed by the experimental science of society had been proposed
by Hippolyte Taine, who can indeed be considered a follower of Auguste Comte’s thought because the latter’s teachings had inspired his hypothesis of experimental politics. Through these pages—according to Gustave Le Bon and Paul Bourget—Taine had empirically demonstrated that French society needed a new Caesarism. “In the name of reason and nature, and in accordance with the ancient laws of the Universe, all hope for the salvation of order and for the duration of a threatened civilization lies in the vessel of the counter-revolution.”

Thus Maurras meant that the uniqueness of command is imposed by the order of nature. The so-called natural politics identifies nature (or the structure of society) with the historical tradition, therefore with moral standards, provincial autonomy, community exemptions, corporations, and “authority.” The last of these, for centuries, had guaranteed obedience: “The order of natural distinctions is therefore inherent in a well-built society,” and “there is no social good that cannot be gathered in the almost limitless field of human differences of descent and blood.” “Natural” politics expresses both the order of nature and the historical tradition, and both “the raising of offspring in animal communities and in the human family” and the “hereditary ties of blood” are elements of “natural” politics.

In that same period, in Italy, Scipio Sighele also observed that “there is a return to studying every human action as a product of society instead of the person, and there is a tendency to follow that wave of sociological or socialist reaction that is going to break against an egocentric illusion that has perhaps lasted too long.” The identification between “sociology” and “socialism” that can be found in Sighele’s text reveals the value ascribed to the way in which both clashed with “individualism” as a principle of democracy and the market economy.

So “natural politics” cannot but acknowledge the social and moral function of the “protective inequalities that exist in nature” (as in the condition of the child with respect to its parents); hence these inequalities inevitably require a hierarchical order “to ensure social stability and respect for differences.” “Natural politics” can only be a realistic politics that knows how much human history is constantly at risk of involutions and losses.

After World War I, from this heterogeneous rhetoric of what Zeev Sternhell has defined the “revolutionary Right,” the fascists inherited the desire for a regime of national cohesion, within which the social question would finally be resolved thanks to a new national socialism, a synthesis of trade unionism, corporatism, and the new political activism. Maurras, after all, had stressed the authoritarian and technocratic nature of his own corporative concept,
and the same tendency had emerged in the Italian nationalist ideologists of corporatism.\textsuperscript{83} The juxtaposition of and comparison between French doctrines and Italian political developments are enlightening. In the 1920s and 1930s, some juridical corporatists, like Colamarino, remained distant from the theses of the supporters of integral corporatism, such as Volpicelli and Spirito,\textsuperscript{84} but Mussolini, for his part, always denied any genealogical relationship between fascist corporatism and the culture of Action Française, even if he acknowledged his debt to other French sources such as Georges Sorel, Ernest Renan, and Balzac.\textsuperscript{85} However, acknowledging his intellectual link with Balzac implied revealing other debts, politically very clear, with de Maistre, therefore also with Maurras. And the analysis of an important text such as *Dottrina del fascismo* also reveals Mussolini’s interpretation of a specific text (written by Ernest Renan), which would be absolutely analogous with the one which had been proposed by Charles Maurras himself in his time.

In fact, in the *Dialogues philosophiques*, Renan had written:

> The goal of humanity is to produce great men: great works are in fact realized by science and certainly not by democracy. . . . The essential thing, in other words, is to produce not educated masses but great geniuses and a public capable of appreciating them. If the ignorance of the masses is a prerequisite for such a result, so much the worse.\textsuperscript{86}

In taking up this passage from Renan in a work of 1913, Maurras anticipated Mussolini: “It remains to be said that Renan has outlined a rigorous criticism of the Revolution and of democracy. Even if we had wanted to disregard it, we could not have done so, since quite a few of us have arrived at the counter-Revolution through his critique. Renan has been a master, an initiator and a guide.”\textsuperscript{87} And Mussolini, perhaps unwittingly, draws upon this text of Maurras, in the following:

> Reason, science—stated Renan, who had some pre-fascist insights in one of his *Philosophical Meditations*—are the products of humanity, but to want reason directly for the people and through the people is a pipedream. It is not in fact necessary, for the existence of reason, that the whole world should know it. In any case, if such an initiation were to take place, it would not come about through low democracy, which seems perforce to lead to the extinction of every specialistic culture and of the highest dis-
cipline. The principle that society exists solely for the well-being and freedom of the individuals of which it is composed cannot be in conformity with the plans of nature: the plans in which, instead, it is only the species that is taken into consideration and the individual seems sacrificed. It is strongly to be feared that the last word of democracy, so understood (I hasten to add that it can also be understood differently), could be a social state in which the only preoccupation of the degenerate masses would be to enjoy the vile pleasures of the vulgar man. Up to this point Renan. Fascism rejects democracy’s absurd conventional lie about political egalitarianism, its habit of collective irresponsibility, and the myth of happiness and indefinite progress, but, if democracy can be understood differently, namely, if democracy means not marginalizing the people, then fascism could be defined—by the present writer—as an “organized, centralized, authoritarian democracy.”

But Mussolini could not admit that the French nationalist writers, and especially the monarchy’s apologist Maurras, had preceded him in revising Renan’s antipolitical and antidemocratic plan and, instead, he attributed the genesis of the conception of fascist “democracy” and of the corporative economy “to the first day of Piazza San Sepolcro” and to the “claims of national syndicalism” deriving from D’Annunzio’s subversive action in Fiume. However, he did not refer to the revolutionary syndicalist Alceste De Ambris, nor to Carnaro’s charter, in which the Saint-Simonian legacy seems evident, but he concluded that

in the great river of fascism you will find currents deriving from Sorel, Péguy, Lagardelle of the “Mouvement Socialiste,” and from the cohort of the Italian revolutionary syndicalists who, from 1904 to 1914, introduced a note of novelty in the environment of Italian socialism, already emasculated and anaesthetized by Giolitti’s fornication with Olivetti’s Pagine Libere, Orano’s La Lupa, Enrico Leone’s Divenire Sociale.

Acknowledging his debt to Paolo Orano meant explicitly recognizing that the latter had preceded him in adhering to a revolutionary version of socialism and, then, in the transformation of syndicalism into national socialism; in fact, Orano had even anticipated the dialogue between Sorel and Maurras and had made revolutionary syndicalism the ideological platform of his own anti-Jewish anticapitalism.
It is not mere chance that, in the passage that I quoted (which, as will be seen, was preceded by some pages written by Orano), Mussolini should pay homage to the value of the Christian tradition. At the same time, he was continuing to deny any assimilation between the fascist corporative revolution and the Catholic and intransigent doctrine of the restoration of the ancien régime and, in other words, the idea of a regression “of the world to what it had been prior to 1789, which is indicated as the year of the beginning of the demo-liberal century. One does not go backward; the fascist doctrine has not elected de Maistre as its prophet.” Mussolini did not intend to concede that Bonald, Lamennais, or de Maistre had been the first real opponents of democracy and the values of the Enlightenment and, as such, could be considered the precursors of fascism.

**Technocracy and the Socialism of the Whole Nation**

The case of Georges Valois (pseudonym of Georges Gressent) is an interesting path to follow in order to try and unravel the complicated and tortuous relationship between Bonald’s anti-Semitism, the anti-Enlightenment political theology of the end of the eighteenth century, and the corporatism of the anti-Semitic revolutionary syndicalists and national socialists.

Valois was an important leader of Action Française who in 1912 promoted the Cercle Proudhon, the group that brought together revolutionary syndicalists and nationalists. Then, with Philippe Barrès (Maurice Barrès’s son) and the high-ranking officer Jacques Artuys (who represented the *anciens combattants*) he founded, in 1925, the first French fascist party, Le Faisceau, whose ideology was strongly technocratic and corporatist.

But corporatism, technocracy, and the “government of technical experts” were not exclusive to Valois’s movement. They also characterized other post-war anti-parliamentary groups, such as Les Jeunesses Patriotes, Solidarité Française, and Les Croix de Feu, the party of Colonel François de la Rocque, and other movements outside France. De la Rocque, a “hero” of the Great War and of the counter-insurgency in Morocco, loved to say, “One can be a socialist without ceasing to be a nationalist, and one can continue to be a nationalist without abandoning the search for social progress: the mark of the resurrection is in fact the combination of the ardent forces of the Left and the revived forces of the Right.”

Clearly, technocratic and corporative conceptions characterized even more decisively the programs of Marcel Déat, who came to be surrounded by
a heterogeneous collection of “nonconformist” periodicals and circles, such as Jean Luchaire’s *Notre Temps* and Émile Roche and Pierre Dominique’s *La République, Jeune République*, and *X-Crise*. The same technocratic approach would also be favored by quite a few leaders of the État National, in 1940, who would have included Denis Bichelonne; Jean Berthelot; Robert Gibrat; the former leader of the Confédération Générale du Travail, René Belin; and the radical Gaston Bergery: these politicians and trade union leaders played an important part in drafting the *Charte du travail*, a corporative constitution characterized, above all, by the traditional concepts of the Action Française, to which Pétain felt closer.

Many different corporative and neo-technocratic plans of “national socialism” enjoyed a widespread circulation starting from the 1920s, and this was mainly caused by the management of the war-time economy, which had created an extremely favorable climate for projects tending to “extol the producer as the new sovereign, at the expense of the citizen.” Georges Davy, a sociologist of the Durkheim school, for example, stated that all the democracies had failed and, for this reason, “Saint-Simon’s prophecy about the catastrophe of individualistic democracy” had come true. The latter could no longer ensure social stability in an industrial society. It was only the producers and technicians who had the necessary ability to govern a modern economy and modern institutions by means of what Davy defined as the industrial state and Valois the technical state. This had nothing to do with direct democracy and workers’ self-government since the abilities referred to by Davy and Valois were those of the entrepreneurs, the scientists, the new elites of an industrial and corporative state that certainly did not take into account social participation: the “producer,” the technician, became the ideal figure, the “psychological type of the person having capital, intelligence, and technical competence,” and was considered the only social figure capable of taking on the responsibility for economic planning, regulating work, and the distribution of credit, as well as directing capital “toward socially useful aims.”

The issues of planning and state intervention aimed at saving the financial and industrial sectors, which were in crisis, naturally became more relevant after the Great Depression. From 1931, the effects of the international financial shock were felt in France and, consequently, in all the political and economic circles the positions favorable to the “economic plan” proliferated. “Socialism,” “planning,” “the corporative system” became the vague but popular formulae of the alternative to capitalism and Soviet communism. There was also talk of socialism having to challenge fascism in the competition with parliamentary democracy and the self-regulating market. The sociologists and economists
gathered around the periodicals *La Critique Sociale* and *Plans* (Robert Aron, Arnaud Dandieu, Jules Romain, Alfred Fabre-Luce, Ferdinand Gros, and Marcel Déat) were fascinated by American social engineering and the ideas about economic planning developed by the Belgian socialist Henri de Man. Quite a few of them were, however, attracted by Italian corporatism.100

Émile Durkheim’s successor as head of the École Sociologique, Marcel Mauss, who always remained a socialist, was an activist in the SFIO and editor of the weekly newspaper *La Vie Socialiste* run by Renaudel. But he also admired the young neo-socialists who favored technocracy and a planned economy, and he remained in contact with them even after their expulsion from the Socialist Party in 1930.

The so-called neo-socialists were led by Marcel Déat, a brilliant professor of philosophy, a former pupil of Alain at the Henri IV High School in Paris, and later a student at the École Normale Supérieure. He had published some studies in the journal *Année Sociologique*, edited by Mauss, and had worked for the Centre de Documentation Sociale under Célestin Bouglé. During the World War I he had lived through what Ernst von Salomon defined as “the experience of the trench community,” and, later he had collaborated with the socialist minister of the *armement*, Albert Thomas, in the Union Sacrée government. These different experiences had made him “understand that socialism had to be able to regenerate the whole nation.” A direct knowledge of the management of a war-time economy, in particular, had led him to adopt dirigiste, corporatist, and technocratic positions in terms of economic policy, and his first book, *Notions de sociologie*, was obviously inspired by Durkheim. Subsequently, in *Perspectives socialistes* (1930), he proposed his own political plan to reunite, in an economic community, “the interests of all the productive social forces of the nation struck by the crisis of capitalism.” In the copy that Déat gave to Mauss, the dedication bears witness to the devotion to their common master: “Marx and Durkheim are for me absolutely close.”101

“Nourished with the philosophical thought of masters such as Durkheim, Brunschwig, and Marcel Mauss, and their sociology based on the idea of national solidarity,” Déat stated he was convinced that “socialism, in the final analysis, is simply this progressive and complete reintegration of the individual in a society where he breathes—in a certain sense—the same air as in the family community. And—let’s admit it—with something of that intense warmth which the sociologists discovered in the primitive clan.”102

Mauss did not dislike the identification of the forms of life in primitive societies with the corporative, trade union, and socialist economic structures
that could have carried out analogous functions in modern societies (Déat defined them as “social groups corresponding with the clan”). But Mauss was also disconcerted when Déat, in 1942, associated the “intense warmth of the primitive clan” with the hierarchical and community society organized by the Vichy regime:

We are on the threshold of community life. . . . Heroism is not only courage on the battlefield but also devotion to the common interest, the feeling that the individual is not complete unless he is integrated in a group and that he is nothing unless he is willing to devote himself to society and to sacrifice himself for it. . . . I would not hesitate to say that there is here something religious, in the deepest and most noble sense of the term: true religion is—perhaps—the feeling of community warmth. 103

Nevertheless, Mauss’s bewilderment did not appear to be fully justified. In fact, the neo-socialist Déat, having ended up in the court of Pétain, could have claimed consistency with his origins because, he had maintained since 1925 that socialism could rebuild an “integrated nation”—as Durkheim had taught—thanks to the “powers of moral cohesion” represented by the corporations of workers and entrepreneurs. 104 It was precisely because of his intellectual consistency with Durkheim’s sociological thought that Déat enjoyed high regard in university and intellectual circles. In 1926, as a Socialist Republican Alliance deputy for the constituency of Reims, he had championed the unity of the “reformist” parties and support for the Republican government. Because of this he had been enthusiastically supported by the small elite of the Fédération des Étudiants Socialistes, among whom Raymond Aron, Claude Lévi-Strauss, and Georges Lefranc stood out. 105

Déat had already developed the idea of a “national and social anticapitalism” based on the unity of the interests of the middle classes and the proletariat in his 1930 study, Perspectives socialistes. He claimed that the working-class movement had reached its maximum capacity for expansion and political influence but that it nevertheless remained far from attaining the social majority and becoming the ruling class. The middle classes had therefore become decisive in order to overturn the balance of forces.

The 1929 crisis, although it reduced the purchasing power of the middle classes, had not produced the systemic catastrophe so long awaited by the orthodox Marxists. Déat claimed that one could not expect that socialism would be an automatic outcome of the Depression; instead, it would be
necessary to build the new social antagonism by reuniting the interests of the middle classes, the workers, and the landowners, by strategically combining different “socialist perspectives” that could pave the way for a social and national transformation. Déat’s socialist and national strategy called for more attention to be paid to the small- and medium-sized landowners, and his review of the categories interested in a national-socialist alliance included artisans, traders, officials, and savers. His conception of socialism seems to be explicitly the same as that of Saint-Simon, enhanced by Émile Durkheim in his lectures on socialism delivered at the University of Bordeaux at the end of the previous century and published by Mauss only two years earlier: socialism would result from the “coordination of all or certain economic functions, from among those which were currently diffuse, and of the responsible management centers of society.”

The workers’ socialism therefore had to become a national socialism, and plan for a totally nationalized society. This would have been realized through the alliance of all the anticapitalist social classes and the control of the “capitalist economy” by “public powers”:

While waiting for the international world to organize itself, anticapitalism will naturally continue to develop within the context of the nation. Why should anticapitalism be insensitive and, so to speak, alien to a historical and geographical environment in which it has evolved and which is its own? ... A nation in fact is not only a territory, but rather the totality of its representations and collective values; that is the past and the future that the term “nation” suggests. If instead capitalism grabs the nation, there is the risk that it will be violently rejected by the proletariat. ... Today anticapitalism considers the nation like a promised inheritance, within which it will be able to attain victory and in which it will be able to realize its constructive aim.

In 1930 Déat broke with the socialist and labor movement. So it may appear paradoxical that only four years later the French Communist Party and the SFIO, shaken by the collapse of the Weimar Republic, should have decided to engender an antifascist front and a broad coalition of “national and anticapitalist forces,” based on an economic strategy that aimed at centralized coordination and the organization of the market, through rules negotiated by the entrepreneurial associations, the trade unions, and the government. By adopting this strategy they had, in a way, acknowledged the feasibility of Déat’s positions.
Converging along the lines indicated by Henri de Man, the neo-socialist proposal represented a symptom of unease in the new generations of activists, obsessed by the problem of which economy would be necessary after the catastrophe of 1929. For this reason, above all, the neo-socialists were determined to make socialism “un îlot d’ordre et un pole d’autorité,” by taking over the fascist plan. “If we don’t do it, others will. . . . We believe that there isn’t only one direction for going toward socialism, and today, thanks to the facts themselves, we realize that ours is not the only way, but that there can be another one: the fascist way.” Fascism—a “new, unexpected” adversary—had “stolen the socialist programme,” but it had had the merit of breaking the traditional pattern of the clash between capitalism and the labor movement: fascism represented a challenge that the socialists had to know how to face. And in discussing the neo-socialist theses presented at the Socialist Congress of Paris, Mussolini himself recognized in them the “sign of the influence that the fascist revolution now exercises on its adversaries.”

Seven months later, on February 6, 1934, the nationalist, monarchist, and fascist leagues marched on the National Assembly, the French parliament. Déat considered that subversive fascist demonstration a “healthy national revolt of the honest people” against political corruption and financial scandals, and he proposed that the trade unions of the CGT should ally themselves with these movements and also the groups “of the third force” and the right-wing parties, in order to offer a new social platform for the mass intolerance toward parliamentary corruption. Thus, he began making contact with Jean Luchaire, an authoritative member of the periodical Notre Temps; with Roche and Dominique, of the group La République; with the exponents of the Christian group Jeune République; with the young radicals of J. Kaiser; and with some trade unionists of the Confédération Générale du Travail, including Lefranc and Belin.

In fact, over the past year the problem has not changed at all: it is a question of preventing the two opposing blocks, the traditional Right and the Popular Front, from reducing the political options of the French people to a clash between these two blocks; it is a matter of denouncing the impotence and the evil effects of the negative positions, protecting . . . unselfish energies and good will. It is a question of gathering the majority of the country around the Plan.

The enthusiasm for a planned economic policy, corporatism, and social engineering therefore arose from the massive demand, throughout Europe,
for new economic skills in the wake of the Great Depression, which had begun in 1929. There was a diffusion of different technocratic, plan-based, and neo-corporative approaches, above all in socialist and social democratic circles, but also in those of the new right-wing groups, in Europe as in the United States. In the meantime, new research institutes were being set up for the application of social engineering to labor relations and the management of industrial disputes.\textsuperscript{114}

This technocratic culture often became intertwined with political irrationalism and anti-parliamentarianism, engendering original visions of the new urban, technical, industrial society: Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius, and Thorstein Veblen, for instance, extolled social engineering, the increase in accumulated wealth, and the \textit{idée d’une technique nationale}, which would have ensured modernization by transferring the power of decision making to the new vanguard of producers and eliminating the interference of the old politics.\textsuperscript{115}

Even Mussolini had launched the watchword “of the national economy of the producers” and of the disciplined collaboration between the classes as early as 1918, when he declared that it was necessary to allow “the bourgeoisie to carry out its historical function and stimulate an intense collaboration between the workers and industrial entrepreneurs.”\textsuperscript{116} However, in the second and third decades of the twentieth century, throughout Europe, the theorists of social engineering and the leading technocrats took up again the trade union and technocratic proposal and emphasized the role of the entrepreneurial and technical elites or the results of the planned war-time economy, devised by Walter Rathenau and his collaborator, the engineer Wichard von Moellendorf. In the Weimar Republic, the theories of this planned economy had won over important leaders of the German Social Democratic Party, such as Rudolf Wissel, but also the publisher of the liberal \textit{Vossische Zeitung}, Georg Bernhard. Von Moellendorf, in \textit{Conservative Socialism}, rejected the inclusion of workers’ councils in republican institutions, proposing instead a “community of national work”; “socialism” no longer meant, according to Moellendorf, economic democracy or the redistribution of wealth according to need, but productivity, corporative cooperation among the classes, and the planning of macroeconomic decisions.\textsuperscript{117} And, naturally, the Italian theorists of corporatism appreciated both the German experience and socialist revisionist theses.\textsuperscript{118}

The Italian corporations were, in fact, only bureaucratic “trappings,” but Marcel Déat and the neo-socialists were fascinated by them.\textsuperscript{119} Between 1936
and 1937, they planned, together with the Comité du Plan, a model of “French corporatism” inspired by the Italian experience. Those involved in the project included the Union Nationale des Combattants (UNC) and some leaders of the Socialist Party (SFIO), the CGT, and the Fédération Corporative. One of the leading neo-socialist exponents, Marquet, became minister of public works in the Doumergue government, set up soon after the experience of the Popular Front: he actually adopted a “plan of public works” to combat unemployment, inspired by the Plan du Travail of the Belgian Parti Ouvrier and by De Man’s theses. In order to help him, Déat organized, together with Henri Clerc and Édouard Chaux, the Journées du Plan, which were held at the Maison de la Chimie:

*Planisme* certainly arose within socialism . . . and, immediately afterward, it tried to broaden the traditional front of the working class, asking for the help and support of the middle classes, with the aim of establishing a much broader anticapitalist front than the class-based alignment; then, as the crisis went on and worsened, it became necessary to bring together all the real producers. . . . In changing its nature, however, democracy generates a new type of state while socialism can prove to be, in some cases, absolutely incompatible with the classical politics of democracy: it is, in brief, undeniable that the very notion of the state has consequently been modified. . . . In conclusion, it is a question of reestablishing a sovereign state able to take decisions. 121

In 1938, authoritarian corporatism and planning appeared to be the way to oppose fascism by using its own instruments. According to Déat, since fascism “had stolen the socialists’ program,” it only remained for the socialists to adopt, quickly, some of its techniques of government. Dumbfounded, his old professor, Célestin Bouglé, retorted that this would have meant “relinquishing many freedoms which are still dear to us.”

Two years later, Déat identified those technocratic and corporative solutions in the policies adopted in the État National and joined the Vichy regime in the name of Comte, Durkheim and Lévy-Bruhl: “The ideas of Durkheim and Lévy-Bruhl have been perfectly confirmed by totalitarianism. The sociologists, if there are still any around, should never forget it.” 122

Consistent focus on his own technocratic and corporative plan of a modern state also characterized Georges Valois’s political experience. Since the early years in the militia with Maurras, the technocratic state was also at the
heart of his economic and political platform, as it was both at the time of his adherence to fascism and after he had broken with it. Valois, then, went the opposite way of Déat even though his economic and political culture was in many aspects the same, essentially a technocratic and corporative approach. In fact, it was not mere chance that Valois was the publisher of Perspectives socialistes, the essay that gave Déat the reputation of being the spokesman of technocracy. The economic situation necessitated, according to Valois, “increasing production, but with a million and a half fewer producers” because of the scale of the human losses suffered by the French in the conflict: it would therefore have been necessary to set in motion “an extraordinary systematization of labor” and “the organization of collective corporative services.” What is more striking is that in his texts, the names of the theoreticians of the scientific organization of labor, Frederick Winslow Taylor and Henri Fayol, were juxtaposed with those of La Tour du Pin, Sorel, and Saint-Simon.

The formula “new economy” undoubtedly alluded to Walter Rathenau. As early as 1919, Valois had proposed the setting up of a Conseil National Économique, the institute that would be realized in the mid-1920s by the Herriot government, with the agreement of Marcel Déat. Then, after having launched the Confédération de l’Intelligence et de la Production Française, which, in 1923, became the Union des Corporations de France, he defined fascism as the only political option that would permit the construction of the technical state. Technocratic corporatism represented a social system of “reciprocal obligations” that was based on “corporately organized trade unionism,” in which the entrepreneurs “would have unceasingly worked for higher productivity” while the workers “would have cooperated unceasingly with the entrepreneurs in order to perfect the machinery and work methods.” Using the old Saint-Simonian rhetoric, Valois concluded: “Fascism wants to offer the country an economic ruling class made up of bankers, industrialists, merchants, technicians, workers, and peasants, which will renew the economy . . . and will give France and Europe airlines, new roads, and motorways.”

Only two years later, Valois abandoned fascism, but not his strategy of the building of a new technical state: in L’homme contre l’argent, for example, he reasserted the continuity of his own plan of technocratic socialism with the youthful start of his political career in Action Française. After the collapse of the ancien régime, he wrote,

for the first time the spirit of invention had entered political government and, in all the states, the new classes attained the directing of commerce
and the country’s economy: classes that were not military, juridical, or theocratic; classes that were partly technicians and whose members were able to take control not only of the functions of labor organization but also of the general functions of command.\textsuperscript{127}

Therefore, Saint-Simon’s social message and his polemical attitude toward theocratic-military systems were still relevant. In fact, the organic age of the industrial society prophesied by the Saint-Simonians, of the new technical state, “the great technical office, where technicians will develop plans for the rational optimization of intelligence and natural resources,” was still of topical interest. The planning of all activities would have been put into force exactly according to the Saint-Simonian conceptual pattern:

Once, management functions were linked with property. Today they are dissociated . . . and property is being transformed. This is what happens in the big economies, in which the proliferation of corporations extends this dissociation to an ever-greater part of production. Here the company managers and technicians are not necessarily shareholders: in other words, a system comes into being in which the shareholders (that is, of the companies), have no technical rights on the property, which exists beyond their control, it grows and dies without them, while the boards of directors . . . use the technical results in order to make financial decisions and conduct financial operations.

The fundamental distinction therefore is between the shareholders and “the class of technicians who run the companies . . . , namely the large organizing class of tomorrow’s world . . . made up of bourgeois and proletarian elements.”\textsuperscript{128}

Redefining the social conflict in such terms, Valois was presenting the technical state as an alternative to the American and Soviet models. It would be governed by a Trade Union Assembly of technocrats, charged with the planning and national organization of production and trade, and by a Producers Assembly, organized on a corporative basis.

It was thought, between 1922 and 1926, that the fascist state could be the European version of a strategy for the technical state: set up by a man who had been molded by socialism and, above all, by the thought of Marx and Sorel, it was thought that he would have integrated trade unionism
within the state, in order to realize the rational organization of production. However, this hope has to be abandoned because the fascist state has liquidated workers’ trade unionism in favor of a corporatism dominated by employers’ organizations.\textsuperscript{129}

Fascism had betrayed the technocratic, trade union, and corporative plan in order to side with companies.

Other pro-fascist writers, like Jean-Pierre Maxence, Robert Brasillach, and Thierry Maulnier had also studied under Maurras, but they did not follow Valois’s antifascist evolution, and remained antidemocratic and, mainly, anti-Semitic:

We clearly see the weakness of a world without a credo, a world in which, as a credo, the socialists and the liberals only have profit and productivity. Ford echoes Stalin, and the American example is taken up by the Soviet one, producing, strengthening, and increasing a concentration of materialism that leads to barbarism, with which, instead, it is necessary to make a break.\textsuperscript{130}

Anti-Semitic writers, including Robert Brasillach, Maurice Bardèche, and Maurice Blanchot, joined Jeune Droite, and Maxence and Maulnier set up the Revue Française, whose collaborators also included the members of another neo-Saint-Simonian movement, Ordre Nouveau: Robert Aron, Arnaud Dandieu, Daniel-Rops, René Dupuis, Jean Jardin, Alexandre Marc:

The material crisis also reveals what has been its real cause: above all a moral crisis and an error in the concept of man! It is in fact the order of the world—a spiritual order—that is at stake, but what is above all threatening Europe is the contempt it displays for the powers of the soul. Europe will, instead, only find salvation in a collective, converging effort to safeguard the spirit of man and the cultural tradition.\textsuperscript{131}

Louis de Bonald would have been well pleased to discover that, even after a century and a half, he still had faithful and unwavering followers.

Being antidemocratic, we denounce the absurdity of a regime based on numbers, whose nature excludes any freedom of spirit and any choice of opinion. . . . Being anticapitalists, we see the immense poverty of mod-
ern man and the failure of capitalism. Being spiritual, we perceive in the universality of the present crisis the need for an essential remedy: giving back to man his real and authentic destiny, which is only spiritual.\textsuperscript{132}

The umpteenth periodical of the young, spiritual, antidemocratic, and anticapitalist Right, \textit{XX\textsuperscript{e} siècle} did not, however, hesitate to endorse the technocratic and neo-corporative approach of the young neo-Saint-Simonians of Ordre Nouveau: founded in 1933 by Alexandre Marc-Lipiansky (a Russian Jew converted to Catholicism and a contributor to \textit{Esprit}), it was in fact directed by Arnaud Dandieu and Robert Aron who, two years earlier, had published two pamphlets that had been resoundingly hailed as the incunabula of the new ideology: \textit{Décadence de la nation française} and \textit{Le cancer américain}.\textsuperscript{133} And it was as representatives of Ordre Nouveau that, in 1935, Robert Aron, Chemilly, and Dupuis participated in the Italo-French conference on corporatism, organized by the fascist Cultural Institute of Rome. Many other French corporatists also participated in that conference, including André Ullmann, Louis-Émile Galey, and Emmanuel Mounier, for the periodical \textit{Esprit}; Georges Roditi and Paul Marion, for \textit{L'Homme Nouveau}, the periodical of the neo-socialists; Pierre Frédéric, for the periodical \textit{Europe Nouvelle}; Jean de Fabrègues, for the \textit{Revue du XX\textsuperscript{e} siècle}; Pierre Gimon for the organization Les Jeunesses Patriotes; Georges Viance for the Fédération Nationale Catholique; and Jean Lamaire for the Centre Polytechnique d’Informations Économiques. And the presence of high-ranking Italian politicians—Giuseppe Bottai, Edmondo Rossoni, Luigi Razza, Ugo Spirito, Ettore D’Andrea, Giovanni Attilio Fanelli—testified to the importance which the Italian fascist hierarchy also attributed to that meeting.\textsuperscript{134}

A few months earlier, from his prison cell, Antonio Gramsci had noted that the “technocratic fashion, inspired by so-called Americanism” seemed to show that, in Europe, some deep transformations were actually taking place: corporatist policies, the creation of new institutions of technical intervention in the economy, and Taylorist rationalization. But nevertheless in Italy “the corporative approach did not originate from the demands of an upheaval of the industrial technical conditions nor from those of a new economic policy, but rather from the demands of an economic police, needs exacerbated by the crisis of 1929, and still extant.”\textsuperscript{135} In other words, Italian corporatism did not have the dignity of a new economic policy but limited itself to an anti-working-class choice. In recent years, Charles Maier has shown that “technocratic-corporative” Americanism and its reception in Europe “did
not coincide at all with the traditional alignment along the left-right axis” but crossed different political parties and groups, characterized by a strong cultural syncretism and ranging from technocratic tendencies, modernism, and conservative corporatism. These groups could be said to include corporatists such as Ugo Spirito, the social engineers gathered at the Amsterdam Congress in 1931 organized by World Social Economic Planning, Henri de Man, Marcel Déat, George Valois, and the German revolutionary conservatives.

The German radical conservative writer Moeller van den Bruck declared that modern technology could not lose its relationship with tradition and that “German socialism” had to link up with the corporative tradition, that is, with the “socialism of the ultramontane church,” with the “socialism of the Prussian state,” and, especially, with the socialism that, according to Spengler, identified itself with “private enterprise endowed with the Germanic passion for power.” As Hans Freyer wrote, socialism had to be a “technical and productive rationality” at the service of military power and of the need to “clear the field of the heterogeneous interference of industrial society.” The last moderns had to appear on the battlefield as “antiliberal” in politics and “Bolsheviks” in economics.

I do not know of anti-Semitic writings by Georges Valois, but Marcel Déat’s initiation in the politics of persecution was explicit when he wanted to establish a party, the Rassemblement National Populaire, in order to organize a mass and “totalitarian” base for the Vichy regime (even though he continued to criticize the État National until 1943 for its institutional weakness and its traditionalist tendencies). His program imperiously announced “the defense of the French ethnic community, against non-assimilable or deleterious racial elements, by means of measures of physiological, economic, and political protection.” And the break with his comrade and former fellow socialist, Charles Spinasse, was caused by the latter’s unwillingness to face the problem of a truly totalitarian policy and its persecutory implications for the Jews.

The basis of his anti-Semitism was not therefore racial or religious but completely social and anticapitalist (even if, as late as 1937, Déat had spoken out, together with other Parisian political and religious figures, against the anti-Jewish measures in Germany). He accused the Jews of being guilty of “an international solidarity” and therefore of being involved in a conspiracy that, among other things, had led to France’s defeat. And certainly Léon Blum was one of the main organizers of this conspiracy. Vichy’s anti-Semitic policy should not, therefore, have followed racial but economic criteria and should
have protected “French” labor with the aim of ensuring “the defense of the nation” against the Jewish conspiracy.  

With these words, at the end of his journey, Déat had clearly come to accept the so-called Drumont paradigm. This constitutes a further and very obvious confirmation that the author of *La France Juive* was once again embodying the emblem of anti-Jewish propaganda: in 1930 Henry Coston had revived the newspaper founded in 1892, *La Libre Parole*; in 1931, Georges Bernanos had dedicated *La grande peur des bien-pensants* to Drumont; in 1935, Jean Drault had likened him to Hitler; in 1938, Maurras and Daudet—for the same reason—had hailed Drumont as the prophet who had foretold the Jewish conquest of the world, by means of both finance and of the Bolshevik conquest. 
In 1892, the organizer of the first French anti-Jewish action squads, the Marquis de Morès, had announced that “the next revolution would be social” and that it would be fought against the Jews.¹ A few years later, one of the founders of Action Française, Henri Vaugeois, added: “The two passions that face the country, the plebiscitary one and the anti-Semitic, are certainly the only revolutionary forces that nationalism can use to counter the parliamentary system that consigns us to the foreigner.”² By then, democracy had been definitively downgraded to an instrument of the conspiracy hatched by foreigners, the Jews. The culmination of this process was—as has been seen—a first clumsy draft of a socialist-nationalist synthesis, attempted by the disciples of Maurras and Sorel in the name of Proudhon, with the experience of the foundation, near the Great War, of the association named after him, “le Cercle Proudhon.” This nationalist and—at the same time—revolutionary association was acclaimed in some quarters in Europe, and especially in Italy, among the nationalist and revolutionary syndicalists who had left the Socialist Party in 1908 and had espoused imperialistic nationalist ambitions as early as the time of the war against the Ottoman Empire for the conquest of the Dodecanese Islands and Libya.³

The implications of the history of these revolutionary national syndicalists for the development of Italian pre-fascist anti-Semitism have never been exhaustively investigated. This is why I suggest, through the study of the biography and works of Paolo Orano, an interpretation of the course of European anti-Jewish anticapitalism and its culmination in fascism; that is, in the political myth of “Italian civilization,” based on “Latin civilization” and
“Christianity.” Mussolini admitted on several occasions the importance of French culture, and in particular of the works of Balzac and Renan, for the development of his views, and he repeated this in 1932, in his interview with Emil Ludwig and even included in the canon of fascism the names of Georges Sorel, Charles Péguy, Hubert Lagardelle, and their counterparts in Italy: the revolutionary syndicalists Angelo Oliviero Olivetti, Paolo Orano, and Enrico Leone, whom Mussolini recalls in *La dottrina del fascismo* (The doctrine of fascism).

In the case of Orano, the historian is confronted by a very personal representation of fascism and its categories, such as totalitarianism and its political religion. This representation is deeply marked by its revolutionary syndicalist and nationalist origins. In fact, from the end of the nineteenth century—precisely from 1898—Paolo Orano developed an idea of “Roman and Christian Latinity”—as opposed to Germanic Europe and the Judaic Orient—which constituted the platform on which he would construct his own representation of Roman fascist totalitarianism, but the anti-Semitic implications of his views would, however, develop only later, in the years when he distanced himself from the Socialist Party and transformed his syndicalist revolutionary anticapitalism into an anti-Jewish anticapitalism. It was also in those years that his links with French culture (particularly important in the case of Gabriel Tarde’s social psychology) was reinforced through the mediation of his wife, Camille Mallarmé, with whom he waged a frenetic battle to set up a Franco-Italian entente for military intervention in the World War I. And Camille would also have been at his side in the anti-Semitic press campaign of the 1930s, writing articles on the same subjects in the French newspaper *Je Suis Partout*.

In his study on *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, De Michelis observes that when this false document appeared, it “did not have an impact outside Russia, let alone Italy.” In those years the code of an anti-Semitism very similar to the message of the *Protocols*, was being formed: “Some ideas spread by the *Protocols* had therefore also circulated in the Italy of Umberto I and the belle époque, both in the Catholic camp (*Il Mulo*) and the nationalist one (*La Lupa*).”4 With regard to the latter instance, De Michelis is alluding to Orano’s contact with Russian exiles,5 hence, to a hypothetical indirect knowledge of *The Protocols*. This knowledge might be real, but, in my opinion, it is not necessary in order to explain the source of the anti-Semitism of this left-wing socialist and revolutionary leader. His familiarity with foreign syndicalistic and nationalist culture, therefore with the French cultural prehistory of *The
Protocols, would suffice to clarify the origin of his approach: Orano knew the works of a lot of French anti-Jewish propagandists such as Édouard Drumont, Maurice Barrès, Charles Maurras, and those of the Cercle Proudhon.

So Orano began the anti-Jewish campaign in Italy, which paved the way for the passing of the fascist racial laws more than twenty years later. *Gli ebrei in Italia* was published by the Casa Editrice Pinciana of Rome in May 1937 and reprinted as early as December of the same year, following the success of the first edition. This pamphlet marked the opening of the press campaign against Italian Jews and caused an immediate and very widespread stir. It was reviewed in the most prestigious national newspapers, from the *Corriere della Sera* to the *Tribuna*. Then—having been officially sanctioned by the approval of *Il Popolo d’Italia*—it was relaunched by innumerable local newspapers and the broadsheets of the regime’s organizations. More than one historian (including Renzo De Felice, Antonio Spinosa, and Meir Michaelis) has hypothesized that the text was commissioned by Mussolini, but a notation in Giorgio Pini’s diary would seem to refute this interpretation: this record could be of some importance, because Giorgio Pini had been editor-in-chief of Mussolini’s newspaper *Il Popolo d’Italia* from 1936 to 1943 (when publication of the newspaper ceased) and during all those years Pini took notes, in his diary, of all his meetings and talks with Mussolini.

From whatever source the original impetus for the publication of Orano’s pamphlet may have come, it excellently performed the function of a final *ballon d’essai*. Paolo Orano was the perfect man to test the response of journalists, leaders, and activists to the possible launch of an anti-Jewish campaign: Gramsci observed in his *Quaderni*, written in 1932, it is always necessary to bear “in mind that Paolo Orano . . . has often spoken ‘unofficially’” on behalf of the regime. Nevertheless, from several quarters there is a continuing tendency to consider Orano’s 1937 operation as being, to a certain extent, inadequate because his formulation of the “Jewish question” would have been unsuitable and unproductive for the census, the legislation, and the persecution. In fact, his perspective would soon have been superseded by one based on biological racism, much more suitable for determining who could be classified as Jewish and therefore segregated, discriminated against, persecuted.

On July 14, 1938, the well-known manifesto of the Italian scientists, “Il fascismo e i problemi della razza,” appeared in *Il Giornale d’Italia*. And from that moment, the dominant paradigm, but not the only one, of anti-Jewish propaganda became the racial anti-Semitism formulated by Guido Landra, Sergio Sergi, and the other Italian scientists, demographers, biologists, and
physicians on the basis of a biological, anthropological, and demographic framework inspired by the nineteenth-century French writer Arthur de Gobineau. It was such a paradigm that mainly shaped the political language and the actions of the institutions, starting with the Direzione Generale Demografia e Razza (Headquarters of the demographics and race institute). The nationalist and Catholic authors also followed suit.

Mussolini, however, perhaps “with superficiality and fatuousness” (as Renzo De Felice writes) or perhaps intentionally, permitted this language to be superseded by other rhetorics. These included Nicola Pende’s language of “eugenics” but also the spiritualistic taxonomy of Julius Evola and the nationalistic and traditionalist publications promoted by the Istituto Nazionale Fascista di Cultura (National Fascist Cultural Institute), like the writings of the classical scholar Pietro de Francisci and Giacomo Acerbo. These two writers—in particular—immediately appeared to be more in tune with the anti-Jewish Christian and Latin tradition and more acceptable to ecclesiastical and Catholic circles. On the one hand, the biological paradigm was certainly useful for passing the persecutory legislation but, on the other hand, it appeared to be less in line with the most deeply rooted national cultural traditions. After all, it was Giacomo Acerbi who emerged as the reference point for all the anti-Jewish ideologists not characterized by biological racism.

The result was confusing and uncertain fascist propaganda, in terms of both political language and regulations. In this context of uncertainty, the traditionally well established anti-Semitic broadsheets also regained attention and credit: they included Interlandi’s *Il Tevere* and Giovanni Preziosi’s *Vita Italiana*. In that period, the Preziosi-Farinacci alliance (the alliance between this old anti-Semitic journalist and Roberto Farinacci, a socialist militant who had become the leader of the violent fascist squads in Cremona and the Secretary of the PNF in 1925) became—as Arnaldo Momigliano noted in a letter written to Federico Chabod after the war—one of the vehicles of the “attempted and progressive Nazification of fascist ideology.” An anti-Semitic *nouvelle vague*, which claimed to be antibourgeois and more revolutionary, then seemed to be on a collision course with Orano’s anti-Jewish views. In fact, it even gave some groups of extremist and consequently racist university students the opportunity of accusing Orano (an authentic pioneer of national anti-Semitism) of showing indulgence and “pietism toward certain Jewish professors” expelled from the university. These groups of students went so far as to challenge Orano’s inauguration speech for the academic year at the University of Perugia, of which he was rector.
In such a context, it is not at all surprising that the Babel of fascist ideological anti-Semitic propaganda appeared, to Guido Ludovico Luzzatto—a socialist Jewish leader who had fled to Paris—a very ideological confusion and a typical “Italian carnival.” Having emigrated to avoid arrest, Luzzatto made, in June 1939, a first assessment of the persecutory policy after the promulgation of the racial laws, stigmatizing it as “the farce, the tragedy, and the operetta” of a “prehistoric regime as bizarre and accommodating as it is brutal.”

Contrary to the opinion of some scholars, Orano’s book published in 1937 is, in my view, an important text because it has to be considered evidence of the firmly established stratification, in the regime’s propaganda, of the different anti-Jewish Italian parlance. In other words, it is evidence of what—adapting the title of a text of that period by the nationalist historian Gioacchino Volpe—we could define as “the variety of Italian anti-Semitism.”

But Orano’s text can also be considered the culmination of his political and intellectual journey, which is extremely enlightening as regards Mussolini’s own cultural path and, therefore, also for his attitude to the so-called Jewish question. In that journey, the legacy of anti-Jewish anticapitalism or, rather, of a real anti-Semitic “socialism” played a role of primary importance. The text, therefore, should be assessed from a completely different perspective than the prevailing one in current studies, in which it is only considered on the basis of its possible inadequacy in relation to anti-Jewish legislation.

I take as my starting point an incisive judgment expressed by one of the most important scholars of the Italian novecento, Delio Cantimori. In the preface to Renzo de Felice’s Storia degli ebrei italiani sotto il fascismo (1961), Cantimori states that “the prejudices common to Mussolini’s generation and to the slightly earlier ones” reflected, in large measure, the stereotypes “of Italian culture” between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Cantimori naturally recalled the Coppola case in the context of the nationalism of the early twentieth century and cited the presence of themes of the anti-Jewish Catholic tradition in the religious press and in the attitudes of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Finally, he referred to the controversial attitudes of some liberal conservatives, but he concentrated above all on the manifestations of hatred from “republican, socialist, revolutionary, and nihilistic” circles, which had “developed in the campaigns against Freemasonry, democratism, and some Jewish circles.”

An investigation of the texts from revolutionary syndicalist, republican, socialist, but also nationalist Italian anti-Jewish anticapitalist literature can, therefore, help us to understand which ideological mechanisms and
rhetorical solutions contributed to the development of fascist anti-Semitism. And, in this perspective, Orano’s last work, *Gli ebrei in Italia*, can also undoubtedly be considered the outcome of an ideological position that had developed from socialist and revolutionary syndicalist positions, as well as from the more modern type of anti-Jewish anticapitalism. This anticapitalism had significantly changed and had become a kind of corporatism well before the Great War, with the acceptance of the Catholic Church’s hierarchy and of the legacy of imperial Rome as the political hierarchical models of “Italian civilization.” The 1937 anti-Jewish paradigm therefore, paradoxically, documents the acceptance, by an old revolutionary socialist (who had become a nationalist), of the theses of traditionalist Catholics hostile to Jewish emancipation and, more precisely, of the prejudice that had been started as early as the end of the eighteenth century by Louis de Bonald against usury and against the conspiracy that had produced the French Revolution. This is the proof of the ways in which the old “intransigent Christian pattern” came to be renewed within the framework of an ideology constructed on the myth of Roman civilization and Catholic spirituality.

But this “return” to the anti-Jewish tradition also reveals the ultimate historical significance of the revolutionary syndicalist path: in fact, with the futurists and the veterans, the former socialist revolutionary syndicalists formed the three original nuclei of the 1919 national-revolutionary fascist movement, which barely two years later, in 1921, would have abandoned any claims to subversiveness to yield, in a disciplined way, to Mussolini’s reactionary strategy. Orano was one of the most eminent revolutionary syndicalists, and more than fifteen years later, he was raised to the highest levels of the hierarchy and hailed as a member of the regime’s intellectual aristocracy: shortly afterward, he would also be appointed a Senator of the Kingdom, a gratifying path for someone who, in his youth, had had to make do with the meager salary of a high school teacher or a journalist of the socialist newspaper *Avanti!* and of innumerable other socialist broadsheets.\(^\text{18}\)

Orano certainly did not come from plebeian origins: his mother, Maria Berti, had been a ministerial official, and a maternal uncle, Domenico Berti, had been a university professor, a parliamentary deputy for two terms and minister of education. He studied at university (but the anti-Semitism of his maturity was not, as has been written, the result of his education in the positivist school of sociology), in Naples with Antonio Labriola, and after in Rome with Giuseppe Sergi, the head, together with Luigi Pigorini, of the Roman Institute of Physical Anthropology. Being interested in the problem of
Sardinian delinquency, he had been asked by Alfredo Niceforo to accompany him to the island, and Orano’s first two works derived from this experience: Psicologia della Sardegna (The psychology of Sardinia) and Il rinnovamento della Sardegna (The renewal of Sardinia), which were published, respectively, in 1896 and 1897. These texts gave rise to the first of the many doctrinal and journalistic clashes that accompanied his literary life: on this occasion, with Guglielmo Ferrero, regarding the Latin-Germanic racial rivalry, and with Et-tore Pais, about Sardinian history under Roman rule.19

Orano had, therefore, had a positivist grounding in anthropology, but Giuseppe Bottai (one of the most intelligent fascist leaders and minister of education), in an incisive portrait drawn in the last year of Orano’s life, underlined how “his thinking was influenced mainly by the French element, represented in his family by his wife, Camille Mallarmé, a descendant of the poet, related to many politicians of the Republic. Certainly his whole educational development has been French.”20

The “French culture” to which Bottai was referring was that of the end of the nineteenth century, when France provided an exemplary anticipation of the crisis of Enlightenment values and antidemocratic tendencies that would inevitably also concern other countries: the “culture of fin de siècle crisis” produced a real rejection of parliamentarianism but was also immediately ready to decree a rejection of the classic response to the crisis of democracy: Caesarism (including its version beyond the Rhine, that of Bismarck). In any case, Orano was fascinated by the criticism of the Enlightenment, of eighteenth-century rationalism and the “naive” faith in Reason as the basis of the rights of citizenship.21

The French “element” in Orano’s ideology, of which Bottai writes, was therefore a kind of frenetic anti-Enlightenment, marked by the search for an antipolitical alternative to democracy: La démocratie serait-elle césarienne ou libérale?.22 Without daring to answer this question, Orano remained obsessed by the danger of the break-up of society “under the impact of the masses,” and—like all the theoreticians of decadence and crisis—he was convinced of the excessive power of the Jewish financial feudality. Like other writers he was terrified that mass society would prevent the “bourgeoisie” from exercising its role as the ruling class and saw the democratic mass society, the rights of citizenship, universal suffrage and parliamentarianism as the terrible forces that would disrupt civilization.23 In order to combat them it would be necessary to activate all the possible responses in favor of social cohesion: in other words, reorganizing intermediate bodies, exercising scientific knowledge capable of
understanding society, and using the Catholic Church’s age-old wisdom. In this way, the path of the socialist Freemason and sociologist Orano encountered that of the Catholic anti-Enlightenment tradition.

In Italy, the stimulus for a dialogue between sociology and the new forms of spirituality came from important periodicals like *Nuova Antologia* and authors such as Angelo Mosso, Felice Tocco, and Decio Cortesi. Some initiatives in this direction had already come from discussions started by Pasquale Turiel and Cesare Lombroso.

At the end of the nineteenth century, the European societies found themselves incapable of organizing their economic development and their increasingly complex internal structure, and in Italy, neither the institutions nor the traditional systems seemed able to restrain the strong processes of transformation. Italian sociology, therefore, followed an antiscientific and irrationalistic approach, and rigorous empirical investigation and respect for positive data were replaced by moralistic or pseudopsychological categories such as “decadence,” “regressive evolution,” “crisis of civilization,” and “interracial war.” Studies, articles, and pamphlets dealing with social pathologies, delinquency, and criminal behavior proliferated, extolling a new cult of the collective: “Today the individual disappears—in politics, in the face of that collective body that is the party or the nation—in science, in the face of that collective body that is the species.”

The “reforming breath” fueled by the myth of progress—wrote Giustino Fortunato—had been cancelled “by a deep crisis, such as could not be remembered, [which] disturbs and dissolves both the social order and the science that reflects it.” The “breakdown of the old convictions,” already denounced by Gaetano Mosca, opened the way to the bitter realization that the original defects of the new Italian state had not been eliminated at all nor cured, starting from the backwardness of southern society and the “barbarity” of those underdeveloped peoples who fostered the proliferation of “evil associations” and criminal powers. In addition to the southern problem, there were the new questions of the second industrial revolution, the disordered growth of the cities, and class conflicts.

Orano’s interest in the southern lower classes and his abstruse thoughts about their “inferiority” were therefore fueled by this literature and an erroneous interpretation of Lombroso (whom he praised in a medallion of 1914), and above all by the views of Sergi. Orano, however, always wavered between biological determinism and a partial acceptance of cultural psychological conditioning, without ever deciding in favor of the primacy of “physi-
cal characteristics” or of customs and languages. Sergi, in fact, had opted for genetic determinism, which, according to him, explained the “degeneration [of the southern peoples], namely the fact that individuals and their descendants who, not having perished in the struggle for existence, survive in inferior conditions and are hardly adapted to face all the phenomena of the subsequent struggle.”

Orano completely accepted these views of Sergi and saw in the biological and social backwardness of the Sardinian lower classes the reason for the worst characteristics of the island race: “a bandit people because of the banditry of their soul, a barbaric people because of its restrained vigor, its exclusive slowness of gestures, its thirst for mordancy, for the atrocious, rancid, hostile.” So that “by means of a hundred different observations a folk psychologist can detect the enormous range of high and low degrees of biological characteristics and of instinctive behavior in Sardinia, compared to those of any other country.” Nevertheless, the pathological state of the social organism did not exclude the usefulness of interventions: those suggested by Orano were not very different from those indicated in Pais’s report to the Chamber of Deputies, but Orano had argued against this report, thus indicating a theoretical uncertainty that became explicit precisely in the “parallel dispute” with Guglielmo Ferrero.

In his representation of the “Latin race,” Orano wrote that the latter, in past centuries, had not prevented, indeed, had permitted “an enormous development in poetry, politics, science, and morality.” And, in no way embarrassed by his theoretical somersaults, in order to defend “Italianness” and “Latinity,” he quickly adapted his point of view to blame Italian political decadence on the “Spanish and German tyrannies” from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. In other words, he blamed history and the lack of political independence in Italian history: “We are what our history has made us, a people of the greatest vitality, who can give through its genius and its work everything that the rest of the world cannot give and cannot conceive of.”

Orano always swung between these two types of explanations, the biological and the historical and cultural, but he was always good at hiding his own confusion behind peremptory exclamations. In a page of his Quaderni del carcere, Gramsci notes that “these opinions which had already been widespread for some time . . . were consolidated and formulated by the positivist sociologists (Niceforo, Ferri, Orano), taking on the prestige of ‘scientific truths’ in a period of the superstition of science.” However, it was only a question of “inane sociology” and of “stupidity and platitudes embellished
with preciosity, which, through Enrico Ferri, had in their time also infected the Socialist Party." For such writers "if the south is backward, it is not the fault of the capitalist system or of any other historical cause, but of nature, which has made the southerners lazy, useless, criminals and barbarians." A few years earlier, in Alcuni temi della questione meridionale, Gramsci had admitted that "in this way the Socialist Party gave its approval to all the 'southern' literature of the cabal of writers of the so-called Positivist School, such as Ferri, Sergi, Niceforo, Orano, and their followers."

It had been the socialist leader Enrico Ferri who had enabled Orano to work for the Rivista di Sociologia and Tribuna and then to join the Roman editorial staff of Avanti!. But in 1902, Orano also joined the extreme Left, taking sides against his political mentor, Ferri, and working with Enrico Leone, Giovanni Nava, and Michele Bianchi on the newspaper Gioventù Socialista, the organ of the Federazione Giovanile. He placed himself under the protection of the revolutionary syndicalist leader Alceste De Ambris and, in subsequent years, he wrote many articles for other revolutionary and left-wing broadsheets: Lotta Proletaria, L'Energia, Il Divenire Sociale.

His anti-Jewish prejudice is not, however, to be regarded as the result of his bizarre late positivist ideological make-up. In his political interventions against the reformist or "centrist" leaders such as Filippo Turati or Ferri, Orano instead repeated the themes and antidemocratic arguments that had already emerged in the critical assessment of his experience with Italian Freemasonry: at that time he had criticized the “idleness of the sect,” the base corporative interests of the democratic-Freemason block, and also the “work of the Israelite activists.” And in his disputes with Turati’s political inactivity and Ferri’s empty words, he had been able to present an equally empty mythology of a general strike. However, the theoretical characteristics of his proposal did not coincide exactly with those of the revolutionary syndicalism of French direct action, which had made the grève générale the linchpin of its antipolitical, autonomist, and decidedly revolutionary strategy.

French revolutionary syndicalism opposed the integration of the labor movement in the Republic, taking up Proudhon’s theory of the breakaway of the proletariat from society’s rules and institutions. It therefore clashed directly with politics and, more specifically, with the proletariat’s political party. In Italy, instead, the dialogue between Giovanni Giolitti and some sectors of the labor movement never completely stifled the capacity to fight of the PSI (Partito Socialista Italiano, Italian Socialist Party), which was sometimes favored, sometimes restrained by the political instability of broad swaths of
the population and of the lower classes. The structure of the party and of Italian socialist organizations was much more composite and flexible, therefore favorable to the alternation between different political leaderships. The Italian labor movement was much more socially and geographically diversified than the French trade-union context, and the pluralism of the Italian trade federations, associations, and union leadership always offered a political space within the Socialist Party. Thus the PSI became a powerful agent of the political socialization of the lower classes.\textsuperscript{39}

Until their expulsion, the revolutionary syndicalists tried to present an effective alternative strategy and fought to attain the leadership of the party.\textsuperscript{40} In Italy, many characteristics on which French revolutionary syndicalism had built its own identity belonged, if anything, to Turati’s opposing reformist side, such as organizational federalism and the propensity for the autonomy of territorial organizations.

The ascent of the revolutionary syndicalists was favored by the jamming of the virtuous economic mechanism in the first months of Giolitti’s experiment of government; the workers’ defeats followed in 1902 and 1903. Taking into consideration this crisis, the revolutionary leader Arturo Labriola, in 1904, joined the Anti-Protectionist League founded by the eminent liberal economists Luigi Einaudi, Edoardo Giretti, and Antonio De Viti De Marco. Labriola theorized the need for a convergence with the orthodox economists committed to a “separation between the economy and the state” and to stemming the state’s “interventionism” in the social sphere that was the strength of Giolitti’s policy. Having first emerged in Neapolitan socialism and rooted in the south, Labriola’s revolutionary component successively attained control of the socialist movement and the Milanese Trade Union Headquarters, the Turinese industrial center, the manual areas of Mantua and Ferrara, and the newspaper \textit{L’Avanguardia Socialista}.

But the revival of Giolitti’s experiment in government paved the way for the final marginalization of the revolutionary leaders. They reacted by creating new Trade Union Headquarters, from Milan to Piombino, separating from the general unions, and trying to infiltrate the leadership of the General Labor Confederation. The defeat of their strategy was sealed above all in the rural areas of the Po Valley, where they were overtaken by the landowners’ initiative and by the proposals of joint participation put forward by the landowners. The latter, in the end, managed to blunt the militancy of the laborers’ associations and to separate them from the other categories of bound labor, small landowners, and sharecroppers.\textsuperscript{41} This happened precisely where the
laborers’ trade unions had aimed at organizing, around their headquarters, truly united territorial communities in order to oppose the control of negotiations for public-works contracts. In the Po Valley, in Parma, Ferrara, and the nearby provinces, the laborers’ trade unions were defeated, and, in 1907, after a series of struggles, the political reaction became irreversible.

In this period, Orano was frenetically active as a public speaker. After having shown himself to be increasingly hostile to a cautious approach toward the reformists, he also accused his comrade Arturo Labriola of paying too much attention to party dialectics and drew closer to the antipolitical positions of Angelo Olivetti and the periodical Pagine Libere. His enormous journalistic production never succeeded, however, in achieving any originality and was primarily characterized by his obsessive dispute with Giolitti, Turati, and Ferri and their policy of “integrating” the labor movement in the system. Orano spent a long time traveling in the rural areas of the north but also operated in some urban enclaves in the south, always unscrupulously using both the neoliberal arguments against Marxism and the revision of orthodoxy updated by Sorel. This was done to revitalize the “subversive” strategy. When, finally, after the Socialist Congress of Ferrara in 1907, the revolutionary syndicalists led by Arturo Labriola left the party to create an autonomous antipolitical movement around newspapers such as Lotta di classe, Avanguardia Socialista, and Demolizione, Orano followed them and worked on these publications.

His torrential production of sociological and political writings also came to include a new field of investigation, religion. His most famous texts, in this context, such as Cristo e Quirino, Critica Nuova, Italia Cattolica, and Il problema del Cristianesimo, were finally collected in his most extensive and best-known work in this field: Cristo e Quirino. Il problema del Cristianesimo, published in 1908, soon after he had left the Socialist Party.

It was at this stage that Orano coupled the categories of “Latinity” and “Christianity.” The birth of the Christian church was interpreted, together with the development of Roman law, as a historical process totally independent of the history of Judaism and at variance with Eastern messianism. In fact, “the soil in which history was made” had been that of the Roman Empire, that is “the prevalence of the world that was already Latin, and [that] was made by means of force and resistance . . . : that marvelous society that then created the law, the result of the slow and precise, deep and systematic development of conquest.”
Cristo e Quirino was reprinted uninterruptedly until 1928, and, the following year, the final edition was publicly praised by Mussolini in his famous speech to the Chamber of the Fasces on the occasion of the signing of the Lateran Pacts. This work takes on an even more crucial importance, for us, as it is indispensable in order to understand the development of Orano’s anti-Semitism: in fact, the thesis of Cristo e Quirino would be updated and taken up again in the 1937 pamphlet, Gli ebrei in Italia, and it therefore constitutes a decisive connecting point between the syndicalist phase and the regime’s anti-Semitism.

With an air of daring, Orano stated that he had abandoned “the worn-out tools of philology and history,” distancing himself both from the “rationalism of Renan” and the “entire German historical school of Christianity, from David Strauss to Harnack.” He then declared that he urgently wanted to satisfy “a need for a conclusion induced by a sociological transformation,” that is, the great transformation of modern society into a mass society that needs modern totalitarian institutions. This would be necessary to liquidate the old historicist thesis of Christianity as an expression of “the land of Palestine” and “the ideas and feelings of a distant rabbi, [who had been] condemned to the gallows, as an anarchist, by the Latin state.”45 His conclusion was clear: Christianity was the result of the encounter among “the Catholic religion, Roman law, and a hierarchical construction.” Formulated by a revolutionary syndicalist, it was undoubtedly an original thesis.

Judeo-Christian religiosity had always been a form of Eastern spirituality, “enclosed in a personal horizon.” The West had managed to turn the words of the gospel into a message essentially addressed to the “gentiles,” with Paul of Tarsus, and to make Christianity the religion of the whole of mankind, that is, the state religion of the Roman Empire. “Europe accepts Christianity, but does not conform to it. The West, in other words, adulterates Christianity to produce its resulting form, which is the Church, Catholicism, and the pope,” in order to raise Roman law to a model of society “severe, rigid, based on force and hierarchy.” The synthesis of Latinity and Christianity was therefore necessarily destined to lead to the political form of empire, the “monarchist-Caesaristic stage” that had expressed the “trends and needs of the masses” of the most mature historical period of the ancient world.46 The Roman Empire had fallen, but only because the fusion of Catholicism and Caesarism had not been perfect. After many centuries, however, Christianity had once again succeeded in offering Europe, during the Middle Ages, a new theological
and political model of a “caste, political and legal”: Medieval Christianity represented Europe’s authentic identity and a political model that was in no way spent. On the contrary, it was more vital than ever and more useful than ever in opposing the fragile representative-democratic institutions: that model—maintained Orano—that had renewed itself in the “real, positive, and social currents” and in the “mass spirit” of the “trade union and national community.”

This passage exhaustively documents how, as early as 1908, Orano’s syndicalist language had been clearly contaminated by the arguments and the rhetorical models of the intransigent Catholic reaction to the Enlightenment, to political universalism, and to parliamentarianism refashioned by the nationalists, particularly by the theoreticians of Action Française. It reveals the transition from late positivist culture and revolutionary syndicalism to a social and hierarchical nationalism based on the ideology of Latinity.

**ANTI-JEWISH ANTICAPITALISM AND LA LUPA**

His adherence to a trade-union national program became explicit with Orano’s declaration in favor of military intervention against the Ottoman Empire, in 1911. After the Great War, Orano joined the Italian Labor Union and in 1919 was elected to the Chamber of Deputies representing the Veterans’ Sardinian Party; the following year, he enthusiastically hailed the Fiume enterprise and the trade-union and corporatist constitution drafted by D’Annunzio and De Ambris, the Charter of Quarnaro.

The most original expression of his thought was in his articles in the revolutionary syndicalist weekly newspaper *La Lupa*, which he set up in October 1910, but these texts are also the most comprehensive evidence of his decidedly anti-Jewish approach, his economic and social anti-Semitism, the violent development of his consistent polemic against the reformists of the Socialist Party, and the block between “Giolittian” capitalism and Turati’s socialist movement, embodied by the prime minister, “the Jew” Luigi Luzzatti.

As a reference point for the banking and industrial interests clustered around Giovanni Giolitti through the network of Masonic connections, the “Jew Luzzatti” would have favored the links between “Masonic-democratic capitalism” and the socialist cooperatives. And so he would have corrupted, thanks to the Socialist leader, also a Jew, Claudio Treves, the leadership of the trade-union movement. Freemasonry, liberal democracy, and reformist socialism appeared to be a consistent corporative alliance of interests domi-
nated by Jews, who had reduced the Socialist Party to a “bourgeois party, on the margins of politics” and dominated by the “activities of the bank, which is called the cooperative movement.” This had been possible thanks to the “aid, measures, and provisions of anti-ecclesiastical and Talmudic liberalism.” Luzzatti, Treves, and the mayor of Rome, “the Jew Ernesto Nathan,” were thus repeatedly attacked and accused of constituting the leadership of “a kind of Jewish imperialism.”

The significance of the controversy is evident. Anti-Semitism was not the effect of Orano’s nationalist choice; it was, if anything, the cause of his seeking out and producing an alliance with the nationalists. This alliance was considered necessary precisely in order to reopen the paths of the anticapitalist revolution in the new conditions of war among nations. So the strategy for 1910 and 1911 paved the way for the turning point of May 1915. A merciless analysis of the facts shows how the “political system in Italy, like the administrative one, is in the process of being completely conquered by a slow, enveloping Jewish operation. . . . We are talking about Latin Judaism, which has been totally infecting, through minute and clandestine obstacles, a dense network of Masonic lodges, sections of free thinkers, popular blocks.”

After having praised “anti-Semitic France” and the “alliance made in France between Sorelians and neo-monarchists,” Orano indicated, for the socialist movement, a new alternative strategy, according to which, “it would be necessary to abandon the old, ambiguous, inflexible concept of democracy, . . . which has amalgamated and mixed up orders, instincts, and values.” It would also be necessary to fight all the reformists. These would include the Liberals and radicals in Great Britain, the Republican “opportunists” in France, and the demo-liberal block in Italy, dominated by Giolitti and Freemasonry and “in which the Jewish element prevails.” If the Jews were leading this democratic-liberal-reformist block, cemented by the anticlerical ideology, the only solution would be to counter it with the grouping of Catholics, nationalists, and revolutionary syndicalists in order to sweep away Luzzatti and Giolitti, breathe new life into productive and anti-plutocratic revolutionary socialism, and remove the Jews from power.

In no way embarrassed by his youthful membership in Freemasonry, Orano concluded:

One must be unjust, not serene, and partisan not to admit that the Jewish element in Freemasonry is dominant, like the one which, inclined instinctively to oppose, to wipe out not only the political Church, but the
Church as a religious institution . . . Freemasonry is not only Jewish symbols; [it] has resolutely and in many ways prepared a whole program to take possession of Italy, in which it plans to eliminate the least sign and spirit and form of Catholicism. This blocking anticlericalism is the profane, and currently victorious, flag of this war plan . . . of Israel—Luigi Luzzatti, Ernesto Nathan and Claudio Treves.53

The anti-Jewish and anticapitalist polemic soon fused with the fight against “Giolittian democracy” and the anticapitalist commitment found clear expression in a warmongering approach. In fact, “the class of the producers wants to arrive at its own war” to “assert its own existence” and take on the “dignity of a conqueror”—he would write shortly afterward—because the war would finally have led to the defeat of those “socialists who have inherited from Jewish thought . . . the concept of the episodic nature of war and the provisional character of armed conflict.”55 The pro-war campaign would have led to the triumph of the ideas of revolutionary syndicalism and national socialism, as had happened in France, where the ideas of the “industrious antidemocratic Parisian atelier”—made up of “Sorel, Péguy, Maurras, and Daudet”—had taken shape. It was also in that atelier that “Catholicism, syndicalism, monarchy, intellectual revolution were the sharp shining points,” all turned “against the Republic and its Jewish nucleus, comfortably growing in the French state.”56 Orano thus explicitly recognized that he was in tune with French anti-Jewish anticapitalism, declaring that “the West is the ground in which history was made and where all the associations of facts and ideas have been possible; after all, the East is nothing other than a big dazzling display of useless movement”: The East, therefore Judaism.57 “I have noticed that the Jewish and Masonic influence scatters and extinguishes in Italy the very characteristics of the Latin spirit that I, a revolutionary syndicalist, feel, bolster, and preserve in myself,” wrote Orano on November 13, 1910.58

In order to avoid the drifting of “an Italy without a destiny of economic and political revolution,” revolutionary syndicalism should have developed a new strategy, “the policy of national interest” against “the Italy of Israel.” It should also have accepted the necessity of military expenditure in order to enter world economic competition—wrote his collaborator Massimo Fovel—and even support the electoral victory of a conservative Catholic, to defeat the “Jewish Trimurti” of Luzzatti, Nathan, and Treves, Giolitti’s allies. Finally, revolutionary syndicalism should have fought to “ensure the antitheses, guarantee competition, preserve—by increasing them—the arguments in favor of
social life and enforce a subordination that Judaism and socialism consider absurd.” From October 1910 to October 1911, in the few months *La Lupa* existed, Orano nevertheless had the time to reveal his ambition of representing the interests of the “mavericks of any political party . . . fortified by an experience that has *not* exhausted or disillusioned us, but that spurs us on to ask the majority . . . for a more willing, more alert, and more resolute energy.”

But what could bring together, even unite, those whom Orano had called “the mavericks” not only of socialism but of *all* the parties? The bond proposed among these heterodox people remained antiparliamentarianism, even though in a totally renewed form (compared to the old antiparliamentary tradition from the times of political opportunism or *trasformismo*): now, instead, it was a real “movement,” complex and much more radical than the obsolete nostalgia of traditional conservatism for the Monarchical Statute because it was strengthened by a larger social base:

Freemasonry attains the fusion of the so-called popular or democratic or progressive or anticlerical forces. To reach this objective, it has activated an operation that has become very vast and has an infallible secret in Italy, it is the bait that trawls in depth and always successfully, particularly in the republican organization: the fight against the Church. This is a formula on which they can all agree. But all of them, united by the formula and the operation which brings them all together, neglect, forget, and end up putting to one side their original *raison d’être*: to create the republic or protect the lot of the proletariat . . . And the Jewish element is the predominant one in Freemasonry, like the one that tends instinctively to oppose, to eliminate not only the political Church but the Church as a religious institution—she who falsified the text of the gospels and of the Bible and prepared herself for the triumph, which was instead Israel’s due.

The rejection of the “Giolittian method” of forming governing majorities and of parliamentary mediation, which had previously been perceived as a typical perversion of the democratic political system and of the principle of suffrage, had now become a rejection of modern democracy, of universal suffrage. In 1913 there would have been the first universal suffrage elections, and “mass democracy” would undoubtedly have brought about the final degeneration of the parliamentary system and of politics.

The nationalist writer Giovanni Papini was the first to shout against the new universal (male) suffrage, from the pages of *Lacerba*: “Don’t let’s give a
damn about politics!” And thus the class of anti-Giolittian “intellectuals” paved the way for an antipolitical revolt that, once the foundations of the state had been weakened, after 1919, would sweep away the system.

But the admiration for the “criticism of customs, of the ways of seeing things, of points of view,” and for the “very incisive truths, ahead of their times” revealed by Papini was also shared by some young socialists: for example, Antonio Gramsci, even though he had always described Papini as a political adversary. This proves that from 1910 to 1914, the socialist Left and the antipolitical Right were, at times, willing to share the same battleground for the presumed “moralization” of the country against corrupt democracy: namely, democracy understood as political alignment but also as a constitutional system. Thus, the criticism of political democracy revealed itself both in the low opinion of the Giolittian political class and in the rejection of the very idea of political and parliamentary representation.

That rejection was carried out through a pincer movement by the Right and the Left, unaware of its long-term effect. The ambiguity of the common reference to Sorel’s thought permitted the socialist Left to define itself as revolutionary while the reactionaries were adopting the same language as the revolutionaries. Thus both sides appeared united in their intransigent denial of political mediation, institutional procedures, and political rights of citizenship, in the name of another image of representation, totally social, fundamental and antipolitical but raised to an ideal of “new life and vibrant faith,” opposed to “the inanities of petty politicians” and “party maneuvers.” The triumph of the myth of “fundamental democracy” guaranteed the posthumous revenge of Bonald and the opponents of the Enlightenment.

Orano’s heterodox revolutionary syndicalist ideology was, therefore, already immersed in a completely nationalist culture when it rose up, ready to protest against a docile diplomacy and quick to demand much greater expenditure on rearmament, in the name “of an idea and its denial, because hatred is a form of love.” This protest was made in the name of the nation but also of trade unions, which were similar forms, in their view, and was synonymous with the defense of the nation and also of the nation’s working class. The tutelary deities of the “new alliance,” who were often invoked—and appropriately, it should be noted—were D’Annunzio, Giosuè Carducci, and Rudyard Kipling: their celebrated philosophy of violence was tailor-made to be used “like repeated hammer blows” against “the bourgeoisie, pacifists, and misers,” in short, against the Jews. This was the case for Arturo Labriola, but Orano was even more explicit. He asserted that Freemasonry has
in many ways prepared a whole program to take possession of political Italy from which it plans to eliminate the slightest sign and spirit and form of Catholicism. Obstructive anticlericalism is the profane and currently victorious flag of this plan of war. A truly very beautiful, admirable thing, if in order to attain, effectively and quickly, this formidable goal, this Italy of Israel, of Luigi Luzzati, of Ernesto Nathan, of Claudio Treves, had not had recourse to the emasculation of the opposing forces, of pride, of principles, of will. In writing these words that will displease many, I am absolutely not making a declaration of anti-Semitism. . . . But I see that the Jewish and Masonic influence disperses and extinguishes in Italy the very characteristics of the Latin spirit, which I, a revolutionary syndicalist, feel, nourish, preserve in myself.

Thus Orano railed against a
democratic popular Italy, totally fused and mixed up in a calcination of anticlericalism. . . . An Italy prey to demagogy, the influence of Giolitti, of Luzzatti, a weak Italy in which the principle of the class struggle becomes the refrain of the homily, amid the incense burnt in honor of the saints in the workshop, an Italy that is approaching the sunset and is forgetful of itself, that is not concerned about its future, an Italy without a destiny of economic and political revolution, a country of rabbits, of dogs without tails, without ears and without teeth, an Italy mother of ideas, lacking ideals.66

The Jewish conspiracy uses the political weapon of the democratic electoral alliance, the so-called democratic and anticlerical block, and Luzzatti is described and attacked as the “ephemeral antipope of the pontiff.”67 The international trade fair in Rome, held on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of Italian unity, also became an opportunity to renew the campaign against Luzzatti and the municipal administration of the mayor, Ernesto Nathan. The latter was considered unworthy to preside over the exhibition, which was supposed to celebrate the unity of the state, the Roman spirit, and the redemption of the Homo latinus. On this subject, Orano had already written that

the domination of the world, which was Latin, is achieved by means of force and resistance. All the Italics have an exceptional capacity to resist. The race that can resist better is the race that prevails. And it was
the Latin race, that obscure, primitive association of astute aggressors, in which the spirit of possessiveness—which in the higher animals is already marked—achieved a high degree; that marvelous small society that later produced the law, a slow and precise, deep and systematic development of conquest and dominance. 68

It therefore appeared paradoxical that, in that solemn moment, there should be, at the head of the Capitoline government, a Jew, elected to represent anticlerical democracy and Freemasonry.

Between secular ambition and the premeditating clerical silence, both fixedly looking at the charming pavilions of the fiftieth-anniversary exhibition in Rome, the bloc has found a way of settling itself peacefully again for the current year. . . . With a bit of Ernesto Nathan’s robust, patient, and tyrannical temper, with a bit of the present diminution of the Roman clerics’ political vigor and the indifferent and irresponsible compliance of my fellow townsmen, the most daring and the oldest dream of Italian Freemasonry in Rome is on its way to being realized. Anticlerical democracy is celebrating, having on its side the monarchy, the diplomatic corps, all the official world, in the city of the powers of the state, the synthetic anniversary and the block of national anniversaries, including the Breach of Porta Pia, whose significance the current happily powerful, or rather very powerful mayor recently reemphasized, repeating words which have caused His Holiness Pius X to complain, as usual, before the world. . . . Whence the Catholic Church sees its religious authority increasingly reduced due to its nonopposition, inevitably or on account of the weakness that comes from ignorance, to those political skills that, in the name of other principles and very different dogmas, succeed in attracting large crowds of visitors and foreigners. 69

The Jew and freemason Ernesto Nathan was branded as the author of “bloc” politics and the tool of the conspiracy aiming at the total economic domination and political control of the country:

Italian Freemasonry cannot but be very grateful to him. Under his auspices, the town hall and the province have been conquered by the Lodge, and Rome has had to experience the stern lesson that comes from the affront of not seeing Roman citizens administering the budget. . . . The
provincials have conquered the city and it is governed by an internation-
alist inspired by Mazzinian humanitarianism, a man with English educa-
tion, character, accent, an example and . . . embodiment of the Masonic
ideal [typical of that] race from which he originates, lacking even the for-
mal and aesthetic sensitivity regarding the significance, the historical and
psychological value of the Italian people’s Catholicism. 70

Once again, in the review of D’Annunzio’s play Il martirio di San Sebas-
tiano, Orano obsessively repeated that “Catholicism, the Church, the heroic
myths of sacrifice, of martyrdom . . . the divine element in prayers were all
due to the Latins,” while “Jewish wisdom is nothing, it is vanity, it is falsehood.” 71
Thus, in the ensuing months, the anti-Semitic articles increased in the pages
of La Lupa, and Paolo Mantica unleashed his anger against the abnormal
presence of Jews in the professions (in particular in medicine). While Libero
Tancredi even linked the case of Francisco Ferrer to the conspiracy of the
“great Masonic Orient made up of Jewish financiers.” 72 Orano published his
clearest analysis of “Jewish capitalist power”:

“Ritual” Jewish murders have been carried out for centuries in Rus-
sia while European public opinion remains unmoved, or rather, totally
unconcerned! Georges Sorel has recently said that the time has come to
break the silence. And, if I am not mistaken, he was asking us Italians
to take a little interest in this matter . . . Sorel is wrong on one point. He
does not take into account that the Italian “free thinker” is such only in-
asmuch as he is, I would say, antireligious in a specific way, and I mean
against the Catholic Apostolic Roman Church. In Italy people are free to
declare themselves “atheists,” in order to be considered “open-minded”
and at the forefront of social and scientific progress, even if through sin-
ister and secret ways they frequent, and not always disinterestedly, Isra-
elite synagogues. . . . And there is more. In Italy, money, often manipu-
lated by loan-sharking, is becoming predominantly Jewish; public affairs,
even if under a Jesuitical guise, are often handled by Jews; the universities
are infested, at the expense of free and lively intelligence, by Jewish ele-
ments. . . . And would it then be possible to stir our national conscience
against those—as has been shown in Russia—who systematically before
the Jewish Easter sacrificed, by completely draining the blood and tortur-
ing atrociously, poor young victims, guilty only of not being Jewish. And
what do the Italian Jewish intellectuals have to say about this? 73
Despite the obvious subordination of Italian writers to Jewish Freemasonry, “Luzzatti’s logic [which] is actually demagogic . . . , namely the moving word of a Palestinian with Talmudic lips,”74 had still not managed to ensure the complete success of the Masonic and Jewish conspiracy, the plan worked out by the new “financial feudality.”

By using the same old formula invented by Bonald and Toussenel, Orano revealed, in this text, his debt to the anti-Jewish and anticapitalist tradition: “Israel and pacifist and impotent socialism . . . inherit their intransigence from the perennial Jewish controversy . . . because [they are] Israelite ideologies, namely against war, the fatherland, history.” By then, “Jewish” socialism had become a timid parasite of capitalism because it was hostile to the latter, but in fact it was living inside it . . . In that socialist proletariat the dignity of the conqueror was absent: wanting to attain one’s goal without fighting one’s own war, a great war, is absurd and ridiculous . . . It is necessary instead that the Italian proletariat should make its presence felt in this war, which will determine every authority and will establish a different power struggle in the world.75

Only the war could defeat the “Jewish plan” and the liberal-democratic Masonic bloc. The last articles published in _La Lupa_ can be considered typical examples of the warmongering aim not only of the revolutionary syndicalist revolt but also of the entire anti-Giolittian reaction, including a wide range of writers and journalists poisoned by an antipolitical and nationalist culture that was the offspring of the anti-Enlightenment tradition and of the neoromantic prewar “Sturm und Drang.”76

Mussolini, after all, did not hesitate to attack Treves and Modigliani inasmuch as they were Jews. In 1919, he repeated his attack in _Il Popolo d’Italia_, indicating “Jewish money” and international finance—just as Orano had done in _La Lupa_—as the causes of the cancer of democracy, the Bolshevik success, and the mutilation of Italy’s victory at the Versailles Peace Conference. Once again, however, Orano had preceded him and, in March 1918, had resumed his anti-Jewish campaign, publishing a vehement article “Israele italiana e la guerra.”77

AN UNOFFICIAL SPOKESMAN OF THE REGIME

More than ten years later, in 1932, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of what, in the regime’s parlance, had become the “Fascist Revolution,” the
man whom Gramsci had defined as “the opportunist who infests Italy with his farces of ideas” was confirmed as one of the regime’s maître à penser. In *La dottrina del fascismo*, a small book, in large measure written by Giovanni Gentile, destined to become the official text of Italian totalitarianism, Mussolini acclaimed Paolo Orano in these terms:

In the great river of Fascism, you will find the currents which stem from Sorel, Lagardelle of the “Mouvement Socialiste,” and from the cohort of Italian revolutionary syndicalists who, between 1904 and 1914, brought a note of novelty to the Italian socialist context—already emasculated and chloroformized by the Giolittian fornication, with Olivetti’s *Page Libere*, Orano’s *La Lupa*, Enrico Leone’s *Il Divenire Sociale*.

On many occasions and in the crucial years for the construction of the totalitarian system, Mussolini turned again to Orano’s suggestions, at least at fundamental moments. The first was the one that has just been referred to, the drafting of *La dottrina del fascismo* and the official codification of the regime’s ideology, with the fundamental support of Giovanni Gentile:

Fascism was not nourished by a doctrine worked out previously, at a writing table: it arose from a need for action and it was action; it was not a party, but, in the first two years, an anti-party and a movement. . . . Above all, Fascism . . . does not believe in the possibility or utility of perpetual peace. It therefore rejects pacifism, which conceals renouncing the struggle and cowardice—in the face of sacrifice.

In more general terms, whenever he tried to ascribe, to fascism, the legacy of national syndicalism and the hierarchical political message of Roman and Catholic civilization, Mussolini seized the opportunity of relying on the writings of the old revolutionary syndicalist Paolo Orano. In fact, *Cristo e Quirino* is a work that Mussolini made use of throughout his career, from the time of the editorship of *Avanti!* until the decisive intervention of 1929 on the occasion of the presentation and discussion of the Concordat and the Lateran Pacts.

The crucial moment of Orano’s return to being the regime’s unofficial spokesman was, however, the launching of the anti-Jewish campaign. His pamphlet, *Gli ebrei in Italia* was published in 1937 and used by Il Duce to sound out the reactions of the various sectors of society at the beginning of the persecution. In the text, there is an explicit, though obvious, *diminutio*
of the patriotism and of role of Italian Jews in the events of the national Risorgimento. Orano in fact declares that the Jews were never true patriots because they had had a “material” interest in national unification: this was because they well knew that the unitary and liberal state would have put an end to the humiliations and discrimination they had suffered in the old states of the ancien régime.\textsuperscript{82} Referring to Jewish patriots such as Daniel Manin, Gustavo Modena, and Isacco Pesaro Maurogonato, he admits that these Jews showed love for their fatherland Italy but immediately points out that “things have . . . changed over the last forty or fifty years.”\textsuperscript{83}

This enables him to misinterpret and falsify the sense of Bernard Lazare’s reply to the French anti-Semitic nationalist and Catholic leader Édouard Drumont, in order to find in it a confirmation of the thesis of the impossibility of assimilating the Jews in any national community.\textsuperscript{84} Since the Jews have always constituted a separate nation, divided, dispersed, and impossible to assimilate, their extraneousness to the Italian nation reproduced the situation that had already occurred for the Diaspora Jews in imperial Rome, to which “Greeks, Gauls, Asiatics, Germans brought their rites and beliefs and had no difficulty in bowing before the Palatine Mars. . . . It was very different for the Jews . . . : their adoration of Yahweh instead excluded every other, and they refused the oath to the Eagles. . . . As their religious faith was mixed with the observance of certain social laws . . . , they devoted themselves to proselytizing” by using persuasion and “sometimes violence, but always great wealth.”\textsuperscript{85}

Nevertheless, the fascist revolution had completed the redemption of the Italians begun with the national Risorgimento and consecrated at Vittorio Veneto. Therefore fascism had inevitably brought to light the incompatibility between Jewish particularism and the new ethical, totalitarian state, exactly as had already happened in ancient Rome, “that Rome, republican and imperial, [which] was in fact established in a totalitarian way like our Fascist Rome.” The fascists, the Romans of modern times, are in fact “Catholics, or in any case, Italians who are totalitarian and, for these reasons, also in favor of the Concordat.” The fascists are, in totalitarian Italy, therefore, exactly what the ancient Romans represented in imperial Rome: in other words, members of a “vast and disciplinary, authoritarian, hierarchical organic structure,” left as a legacy to Latin civilization “by Paul of Tarsus and by the Empire” and in which Christian spirituality “had freed itself of every Jewish residue,” in order to become the “religion of the peoples.”\textsuperscript{86} According to Paolo Orano, the only modern political thinker who understood the nature of this Christian and imperial tradition was Dante Alighieri.\textsuperscript{87}
Orano’s operation therefore appears ambiguous and perfidiously two-faced because, on the one hand, he includes his anticapitalist anti-Jewish paradigm in the anti-Jewish Catholic tradition and, on the other hand, he tries to show that fascism is the natural heir of the Catholic political message. In his previous study, Il Fascismo, published barely two years earlier, he had, however, concluded: “In Fascism every issue with the Church subsides and disappears because in Fascism there is a developing religiosity. Therefore the new fact, the overriding event, is Fascism, wanted, believed, and lived like a religion.”

If in its own time even “the socialist movement did not reject an attack against the Jews, because they were rich and usurers,” it had, however, been the Catholics who had more decidedly fought the legal emancipation of the Jews. A further confirmation of the interpenetration between anti-Jewish anticapitalism and the polemical Catholic tradition against Jewish emancipation is to be found in the passage in which Orano was not afraid to quote, to his own advantage, a page from the study The Jews by the British anti-Semitic writer Hilaire Belloc.

Translated in 1934 with the imprimatur of the Curia of Milan, Belloc had in fact attacked as false:

1) the claim that the Jew was a citizen like any other, different only in his attachment to a particular religion; 2) the other claim, that this religion was one of the many religions, more or less of a single type; 3) the claim that a man could be Jewish and, at the same time, a citizen of the same mould as any other: this triple claim had always been desperately maintained despite its monstrous falseness.

Where Judaism had been integrated and “protected within the nation,” thanks to legal emancipation, it had hatched the plot against this same nation by taking advantage of its own economic force to exploit the national community. Then, after the World War I, it had not hesitated to ally itself even “with the enterprise of Bolshevism, which aims at subverting Latin civilization, the Roman State, the Church, the fatherland and the social order,” as had also happened, after some years, in Republican Spain and in France governed by Léon Blum. (The same thesis had already been put forward the year before in another anti-Semitic text, written by another fascist leader, Alfredo Romanini: the violent pamphlet Ebrei, cristianesimo e fascismo, which provoked—as had happened in the case of Orano’s text—the continuing protests of the [fascist] leaders of the Committee of Italian Jews). According to Orano
and Romanini (and with a lot of inconsistency), after 1917 the Jewish conspiracy could have counted on international finance, the Soviet regime, and the Balfour Declaration: the last was obvious proof of the Anglo-American imperialist support for the establishment of the Jewish state; therefore, anti-fascism, socialism, and “the declared Zionism [that] today is in full swing in our country” constitute the different faces of the self-same “Jewish enterprise of subversion.”

Before the founding of the state of Israel, Orano’s pamphlet has been one of the first documents in which the anti-Jewish and anticapitalist paradigm appears strongly linked to the radical polemic against the national Zionist ideal (as an imperialist program). So Orano’s attack also had a crucially important diplomatic aspect. The alleged support of Italian Jews for Zionism was imbued with the suspicion of their deliberately wanting to compromise Italy’s strategic position in the Mediterranean and her policy of seeking a presence in Arab countries. This presumed Jewish approach would all have been to Great Britain’s advantage, and, thus, the accusation of belonging to an inexorably and unavoidably different nation became more insidious. And, despite conversion, assimilation, or legal emancipation, there was the progressive insinuation of the suspicion of betrayal and connivance in a presumed international conspiracy, fueled by Orano and other propagandists, such as Gino Sottochiesa, who readily intervened. After the publication of Orano’s book, Mussolini, who had even met, on several occasions, the president of the World Zionist Organization, Chaim Weizmann, and had tried to exploit the Zionist movement in an anti-British way, changed his attitude to an anti-Zionist and anti-Semitic one.

The publication of Orano’s book was followed by a favorable review in *Il Popolo d’Italia*, unleashing a wide-ranging discussion about the “place” of the Jews in Italian history and society. Mussolini felt authorized to concern himself directly with the issue, but, nevertheless, those responsible for propaganda remained for a long time without any precise instructions from the minister of popular culture. The propaganda machinery, national and local, remained without a definitive command and without a model to which to conform the political practice of forgery and manipulation.

Thus it was Mussolini’s diplomatic journey to Germany, at the end of September 1937, that probably accelerated his decision to mark a turning point in the totalitarian mobilization, without there being, however, any indication of German pressure for an Italian alignment with the Nazi persecution. It was only in November 1937 that the secretary of the Italian embassy in Ber-
lin, Marquis Tassoni, received the brief of drawing up a report on German anti-Semitic legislation for the Foreign Ministry. But, as late as June 1938, Ambassador Attolico declared that he suspected the anti-Jewish violence in those weeks in the Reich only constituted a diversion, used by the local Nazi Gauleiter to distract people’s attention from economic problems.\textsuperscript{96} Anyway, the fascist ambition of molding the “new man,” in view of the imminent military mobilization of Germany and Italy, soon became a matter of urgency: in fact, it was necessary to implement the “anthropological revolution” of which the Ethiopian enterprise and the birth of state anti-Semitism would have been the linchpins. State anti-Semitism, in particular, fit in with the political will of designating an internal enemy whose presence could unite the nation cemented by Italian civilization and the Catholic tradition.

A new platform was urgently needed, but the new “manifesto” ordered by Mussolini and based on biological categories by Guido Landra, although useful for defining the racial type of the “Jew,” did not correspond with the images, figures, and stereotypes that the national, Catholic, and syndicalist anti-Jewish tradition had deposited in the nation’s memory. Shortly afterward, and not by chance, the ephemeral power gained by Landra and the young racist “anthropologists” in the Ministry of Popular Culture, was challenged by the Demorazza (the Head Office of Demography and Race) of the Ministry of the Interior. So, after a few months, in February 1939, Landra was replaced by Sabato Visco,\textsuperscript{97} who was put in charge of the Office of Race because he was a well-known professor of physiology, a member of the National Research Council, and director of numerous institutes but, certainly, not a theoretician of an inflexible biological determinism. On the contrary, Visco advocated an anti-Semitism that could be defined as “cultural” or “spiritual,” in line with the approach of Minister Bottai, Acerbo, and, above all, the national Catholic tradition. According to their vision, the new man had to be “molded” above all by the totalitarian educational institutions and, therefore, by the national education system, based on the idea of Latin (and Catholic) civilization with which the fascist paradigm of hierarchy had by then completely complied.\textsuperscript{98}

Propaganda—more generally the regime’s communication—obviously also complied with the biological point of view, even if it continued to insist, above all, on the national, cultural, and religious tradition and, therefore, the nonassimilation of Italian Jews “in the country in which they live and prosper, and of which they have the citizenship.”\textsuperscript{99}

The 1938 laws against the Jews had had an immediate precedent. The first fascist racist legislation, promulgated between 1936 and 1937 after the
conquest in East Africa, discriminated against the colonized peoples. In the combination of colonial racism and anti-Semitism the regime therefore took up again the old nineteenth-century paradigm: colonialism found in the racist doctrines the justification for invading other lands to be “civilized” and Christianized. But the anti-Jewish anticapitalist paradigm, on the contrary, always played on the fear of being, in turn, invaded: invaded by an internal social group (the Jews), which was seen as constituting an aggressive and anomalous parasite that corrupted national and religious unity.

Precisely in the period in which modern nationalisms demanded linguistic and institutional homogeneity, the emancipated Jews had come out of the physical and legal ghettos and spread throughout society. So nineteenth-century anti-Semitism was a reaction to this internal “invasion,” and drew its stereotypes from Christian anti-Judaism, which had settled in the mentality of Catholics, and the social reaction to Jewish emancipation (as a paradigm of every social emancipation) was a kind of new anticapitalist reaction, which fed on the Christian social criticism of the free market. But in the mid-1930s, Italian fascism also had evident “imperial” geopolitical objectives and needed the support of Nazi Germany in the colonial competition with France and England. Therefore, the Jews fleeing from persecution in German lands (the Nuremberg anti-Semitic laws date from 1935) represented, for the regime, an embarrassing obstacle to the alliance with Hitler’s Germany. Hence, fascist persecution stemmed from these foreign Jews before it became an organic anti-Semitic state doctrine.

In this new context, La difesa della razza (The defense of the race, the regime’s official racist periodical) revealed in the word “difesa” (defense) the fundamental nature of fascist social anti-Semitism: the self-pity of the victim who declares that he is threatened and therefore needs to defend himself from someone who was attacking him, polluting purity, invading the land and blood, contaminating traditions and customs. Jewish economic power wanted to dominate by infiltrating the vital ganglia of the institutions, and the self-pitying character of anti-Jewish anti-capitalism transformed the aggressors into victims and the victims into aggressors. Thus, one of the aspects that distinguishes this kind of anti-Semitism from other forms of xenophobia and racism was the figment of the imagination that the Jews were a group of occult and extraordinary power: they were inferior, like everyone else who did not belong to the nation, but also capable of rising up and dominating society.

But why did the Jews become, in the fascist representation, such a powerful enemy? From the theological point of view—of course—because they
would have created a religion and a God and then sacrificed him; from the social point of view, because their emancipation and their consequent “social interference” had benefited from the liberal revolution against the church and traditional society: this demonstrated that it had been the Jews who had promoted the revolutions; that is, it demonstrated their alleged power to subvert the social order. Therefore, fascism took up once again certain anticapitalist attitudes in a new right-wing version, as well as the program of the Risorgimento: having made Italy, it was a question of making the Italians. In forming the national fascist state, the local, linguistic, ethnic communities were dissolved, or at least they yielded to a state centralization, within the image of an extended and common homeland that contains and subordinates them. But the fascist version of the idea of nation sought a new social cohesion by reproducing on a vast scale the logic of the ethnic group: the unity of language, historical narration, religion, and, in consequence, intolerance, going as far as persecution, of diversity (seen as deviance and a threat to society). So that anti-Semitism finally became a narcissistic instigation of the “most beloved sons of the homeland,” who have to consider themselves as having superior blood compared to the others. Point 6 of the Racial Manifesto, published on July 26, 1938, states:

There is by now a pure “Italian race.” This statement is not based on the mixing up of the biological concept of race with the historical-linguistic concept of a people and nation, but on the purest blood ties that unite the Italians of today with the generations that for millennia have populated Italy. This ancient purity of blood is the greatest claim to nobility of the Italian Nation.

The text began with the phrase “There is by now a pure ‘Italian race’” but it continued by evoking the “purest blood ties” that have existed “for millennia”: but the by now was inconsistent with the idea of a history of millennia because, if the purity had lasted for millennia, it was not possible that the Italians had “in the end, finally” attained it.

To conclude: the fascist anti-Jewish campaign could find consensus in the population only in the measure in which it reflected the feelings of hostility and indifference that tradition had sedimented in the nation’s collective psychology. And this tradition was revived, at that time, also in the official editions of Vita e Pensiero, in the publications of the Catholic University of Milan, in a wealth of Episcopal and parish leaflets (but also vulgarized in the mediocre novels of Maria Magda Sala, Lino Cappuccio, and Mario Appelius).
The high priest of this genre, in fact its initiator in the period immediately after the Great War and in the national literature, was the novelist Giovanni Papini, who converted to Catholicism after the frenzy of the prewar Sturm und Drang of antipolitical intransigence and the avant-gardism of the periodical Lacerba. His conversion to the church, first documented in Storia di Cristo, published in 1921, and then in the Dizionario dell’omo salvatico, led, a few years later, to his ravings against “the ideology of gold” and “the Jewish monopoly of finance.” His conversion also led him to adopt the dross of die-hard Catholic literature, therefore the paradigm of the conspiracy. The plot, or “the plan of the Elders of Zion” was a recurring theme in his writings as in those of another writer, Sala.

In a very short time, Giovanni Preziosi’s translation of the Protocols went through six reprints (others appeared anonymously between 1937 and 1939). Monsignor Giovanni Cazzani, Roberto Farinacci, Alfredo De Donno, Gino Sottochiesa, Mario Lolli, and Alfredo Romanini tried to popularize the message of the Protocols and to adapt it to the tradition of the condemnation of usury.

Jesus is the shepherd; the flock of which He speaks was Israel, the Chosen People, a large proportion of which did not want to recognize, as the Messiah, its great son; we Christians are the other sheep. Well then, I hold the firm conviction that the impetus for the formation of a single flock and a single shepherd will come from the national movements and in the front line there will be Fascism, with its fundamental ideals of love of family, fatherland, religion, spirit of sacrifice, love of work, corporative brotherhood. Our ancient Latin fathers, pure descendants of Aryan ancestors, like the Germans, Celts, Greeks, and Slav, practiced, to the highest degree, these virtues.

In Sottochiesa’s text, instead, the Jews’ national irreducibility, in terms of blood, was explicitly defined in the traditional form of the indelible macula:

The Jew will never cease to be a Jew, nationally speaking. If in terms of religion there can be apostasy, it is never possible with regard to race and nation, since no human creature is able to reject his own origin and his psychological-physical constitution, renouncing his own blood. Religion is above all feeling, and therefore subject to change. Race is blood, flesh, congenital intimacy.
And even the very success of Zionism in the 1930s—though barely noticeable, despite the increasing persecution throughout Europe—far from being perceived by the fascists as a reaction to ancient discrimination and new violence, was subject to a contrived interpretation as the confirmation of such “congenital intimacy,” and this occurred on such a scale as to arouse perplexity, even among the orthodox apologists of the traditional strategy of conversion, such as Padre Mario Barbera. In a context of racist propaganda of a biological kind, the apologists of the conversion of the Jews to the Christian religion and the “social” anti-Semites risked appearing antiquated, tied to outdated explanations and solutions, while Orano could boast of being consistent (even in the incongruity of his own thought). But even his “social” anti-Semitism, his anti-Jewish anticapitalism, had to translate itself into a precise policy of discrimination and a purge of the various state administrations, the banking and financial system, and the universities.

It is very useful to recall here the irony of an antifascist conspirator, Vittorio Foa, who was arrested in 1935 and in 1936 sentenced to fifteen years’ detention. He referred to Orano’s “consistency in his inconsistency,” but his irony, nevertheless, had to pause in the face of another bitter observation: “Once it had been put” the question, “what did it mean to be Jewish, this same question turned out to be impossible to cancel.”

Foa also observed that the roots of this hatred were deeply buried in the prejudice of a presumed difference in Jewish blood, which was, in any case, irreducible. This rendered the representation of an eternal “enemy,” who had always been involved in a conspiracy, plausible, and this intentionally falsified representation was believed to such an extent as to “become the Bible of a mass movement,” as Hannah Arendt observed. So it was necessary to offer a new “explanation as to how this had been possible, and not demonstrating for the hundredth time what everyone already knew, namely that it was a fake.” And in Italy, the regime’s anti-Semitism did not indiscriminately adopt every form of anti-Jewish propaganda, as has been maintained, but it exploited the concept of national identity in order justify the defense of the Italian race from an alleged conspiracy, both economic and political.

Any semblance of maintaining the linking of the regime’s persecution to the presumed correct “proportion” between the population and the Jewish minority was abandoned with the exacerbation of the anti-Jewish measures in 1939 and 1940. These measures led to the expulsion of foreign Jews from Italy and the generalized persecution of Italian Jews; those affected included school teachers and pupils; officials in local government, in state-controlled
bodies, in national works; and the directors and employees of banks and insurance companies. Finally, all the Jews were deprived of their property and of important rights ranging from the safeguarding of their civil rights to the freedom to testify.

With these laws the fascist regime retraced the path that had been followed by the liberal state after national unity had been attained in 1860. The anti-Jewish legislation from 1938 to 1940, but even the 1929 Concordat and the new 1930 civil code, constituted a regression to the 1837 Sardinian-Piedmontese penal code and finally to the discrimination of the states of the ancien régime. In 1942 the new civil code included all the racial legislation in article 1 of book 1, which defined the limits of a person’s legal rights on the basis of their “belonging to particular races.” And finally, the following year, article 7 of the Verona Charter of the Italian Social Republic revoked the citizenship of Italian Jews. It also included the total confiscation of their goods, definitively linking the biological paradigm of the “Scientists’ Manifesto” (“Manifesto degli scienziati”) of July 14, 1938, with the representation of the Jew as a social enemy. The propaganda and the persecution based on the well-established thesis of the Jewish, capitalist (and Bolshevik) international conspiracy against the national state finally resulted in the policy of expropriation and total confiscation, even if the Italian Social Republic also attenuated the old semblance of economic socialization in a purely technocratic rhetoric (appreciated by the entrepreneurs). However, it did not fail to ensure, by means of its own police force, the arrest of almost half the Italian Jews sent to the camps.

A comparative study of the policies of social and economic persecution in fascist states is yet to be carried out, but the framework in which such a study should be placed remains the unsurpassed research by Timothy W. Mason on the crisis in the economy of the Reich as the driving force of Nazi social imperialism.

I only recall that the capitalist German economy was subject to the “primacy of politics,” which excluded, from the start, entrepreneurs and economic forces from the decision-making process. There was consequently the dominance of the firms and the state-owned companies through the policy of job orders and four-year plans: from 1936, in particular, the private firms not linked with rearmament production began to decline and the financial lobbies were marginalized while, in the meantime, the Nazi authorities decided to ignore the demands of the entrepreneurs for the limiting and reduction of salaries, thus giving the working class a certain influence.
This had important political effects: the reconstruction of the economy was weakened by these decisions and further exacerbated by rearmament, which destroyed many margins of accumulation and drastically reduced the range of political options. The decisions made in September 1939 would therefore have been in some way required by the need to avoid economic collapse and to speed up the acquisition of new resources. At that time, between the attack on the Sudetenland and the invasion of Poland, the exacerbation of the Nuremberg laws led to the radical expropriation of the Jews.

Analogous observations could be made regarding the French situation in the Vichy years. In the État National, the second Laval government completely eliminated any semblance of corporatism. Apart from the ideological superstructure, which recalled the rural myths of Maurice Barrès and Lucien Romier, the Vichy government was unable to translate the protectionist and traditionalist propaganda about defending small landowners into a real corporation paysanne. Instead, the bureaucratic and technical solutions and the requirements of war prevailed, and a single Ministry of Agriculture and Procurement was set up in order to have a rational administration of resources. Despite the appointment of a former leader of the Confédération Générale du Travail, René Belin, to the Ministry of Industry, the measures in the Charte du Travail of October 1941 envisaged the abolition of the trade unions but were limited to the creation of comités d’organisation to register the factories and carry out the planning of resources, thus favoring exclusive control by company representatives.

So French “socialisme national” engendered a regime that was more conservative than fascist but that was perfectly capable of persecuting its own Jewish citizens economically by confiscating their real estate and goods. The second Statute on the Jews, issued in June 1941, intensified their exclusion from administrative posts, state employment, and schools and drastically limited their access to the professions. Finally, it reexamined both the criteria of citizenship and the expropriation (or Aryanization) of companies, often rivaling the occupying Nazi authorities.

Thus, throughout Europe, anti-Jewish anticapitalism and “national” socialism revealed the true nature of their social policy.
MARC BLOCH’S DILEMMA

In one of his most recent studies, Saul Friedländer reproposed the controversial question of the relationship between Marc Bloch’s Jewish identity and his belonging to the French nation, which he proudly proclaimed to his death. Of the will written by the resistance fighter Narbonne (the name Bloch chose for his role as an underground activist) in Clermont Ferrand, on March 18, 1941, Friedländer offers an interpretation which does not—in my opinion—fully convey some of the meaning, both evident and hidden, of the text. For example, he overlooks a passage that sheds vivid light on Bloch’s real thought.

I have not asked that at my grave Jewish prayers should be repeated, even though their intonation accompanied, to their final rest, so many of my ancestors and my own father. Throughout my life, to the best of my ability, I have aimed at a total sincerity of expression and spirit. . . . Like someone so much greater than me, I would wish that on my tomb, as the only inscription, there should be carved these simple words: Dilexit veritatem. It was for this reason that in this hour of final leave-taking, when every man has the duty of reassessing himself, I could not accept that in my name the ardor of an orthodoxy whose creed I do not accept should be invoked. But it would be even more loathsome for me if there were someone who, in this act of honesty, were to see something akin to a cowardly denial.

Such words are not easily misunderstood. Bloch decidedly rejects a religious orthodoxy in which he has never believed but does not deny, and in fact even
proclaims, his own identity, by birth, as a French Jew. After this passage, there follows the sentence also quoted by Saul Friedländer: “I therefore declare, if necessary in the face of death, that I was born Jewish; that I have never thought of denying it, nor have I ever had reason to be tempted to do so.” But Friedländer omits the subsequent sentence: “In a world assailed by the most atrocious barbarities, doesn’t the generous tradition of the Jewish prophets, which Christianity, in its purest form, took up and spread, perhaps remain one of the best reasons for living, believing, fighting?”

Was Bloch’s question purely rhetorical? It expresses a conviction that is open to more than one interpretation. The sentence is not unambiguous; it refers to a current presence of the prophetic tradition that, as Bloch knew perfectly well, had fueled Jewish and Christian messianism. But it could also refer to the modern utopias of social justice, the political thought of democracy and socialism, which were also fueled by that tradition. Anyway, the text ends with another passage that is, instead, quoted by Friedländer, in which Bloch correlates his belonging to Judaism as well as his bearing witness to the relevance of his ethical aspirations with his profession of loyalty to the French Republic and state, and the rational substance of the world’s first ethical and monotheistic religion is stated in these terms: “Alien to any formality as to any presumed racial solidarity, throughout my life I have felt first of all and simply French. Tied to my fatherland by a very long family tradition, fully nourished by its spiritual heritage, I have loved it very much and served it with all my strength. Never has my being Jewish seemed an obstacle to these feelings.”

His military service, as an officer in two world wars, is mentioned with sobriety but also with pride, together with his memories of his work as a university teacher in the public system of national education built by the new France, which arose from the attainment of the rights of citizenship. Friedländer states that Bloch accepted his Jewish origin “without seeing it as anything more than a bureaucratic question” and that the persecution to which he was subjected, in the years of the Vichy regime, not only hurt him deeply but brought to the surface a Judaism that, until then, had lain dormant, without however calling into question his loyalty to his country. The observation can be accepted to a certain extent, but not Friedländer’s barely convincing conclusion about Bloch’s difficulty in resolving the dilemma between his French nationality and a Judaism “which appeared to him to be irreconcilable with his French character.”

I think, instead, that the sentence with which Bloch proclaims his right to live all his different identities decidedly disproves the dilemma referred to by
Friedländer. Nor does Bloch’s genuine universalist vocation seem to be disavowed by his plea, to the Union Générale des Israélites de France, which can be seen as a political act aiming at avoiding the expression of positions that would permit the Vichy authorities to set Frenchmen, French Jews, and non-French Jews against one another. Friedländer nevertheless concludes that Bloch, while rejecting the category of “race,” accepted a sort of religion of the fatherland based on the mythical essence of the nation, and this would explain, according to Friedländer, not only Bloch’s positive view of some nationalist scholars like Georges Dumézil (a question to which I shall return) but also the hope that his French identity could free him “from the stigmatization of a perceived, but not accepted, difference: [his] Judaism.”

But what appears paradoxical is that Friedländer juxtaposes Marc Bloch’s dilemma with Ernst Kantorowicz’s romantic nationalism and the latter’s indulgence toward the mythical conception of “race.” Kantorowicz was also Jewish and suffered directly the Nazi persecution that, obviously, shattered his romantic and nationalist illusions, but the terms in which Friedländer proposes this juxtaposing of Bloch and Kantorowicz are not convincing. Nevertheless, they can offer a valuable starting point from which to go beyond Friedländer’s hypothesis and reassess the crucial question of the heritage of romantic cultures in European nationalism and anti-Semitism.

Kantororwicz wrote an excellent work on Frederick II in 1927, when he was completely in tune with the ideas of Stefan George’s literary and esoteric circle and was very interested in the figures of German national-romantic mysticism. At the end of the 1920s, the problem that obsessed these circles was the “crisis of the Western spirit” and the looming “general barbarism.” Stefan George, Ernst Robert Curtius, and Kantorowicz extolled the communities of the traditional European elites in contrast with the “enlarged democracy that now gradually threatens to become the greatest danger for spiritual freedom.”

Kultur, science, and philosophy were threatened by democracy, but instead of mass democracy, Kantorowicz, like Curtius, Ortega y Gasset, and Huizinga, favored the ideal of a European civilization of elites. (However, in his last work, Huizinga—in contrast with Kantorowicz—ferociously attacked antidemocratic policy, nationalism, and anti-Semitism).

Stefan George, together with Arnold Toynbee—with his concept of the vital curves designed by the history of cultures—inspired Ernst Robert Curtius’s work on the origin of European literature in the Latin Middle Ages and the integration of the Germanic world in the Greco-Roman tradition and in the fourth-century church:
The literature of “modern” Europe is so closely tied to that of Mediterranean Europe as if the Rhein received the waters of the Tiber. The last great poet of Franco-Rhenish origin, Stefan George, felt ties, on account of elective affinities, with both Roman Germany and the Frankish kingdom of Lothair, from which his family descended. In six obscure Rhenish Sprüche, he projects the history of that reign, almost in a dream, toward the future: that reign will shake the domination of the East and the West, of Germany and France. . . . Goethe expressed his predilection for the Roman world; he said that he has certainly lived another life under Hadrian. He is instinctively attracted by what is Roman; the profound intelligence, the order in everything, everything attracts him. . . . I present these statements because they reveal that Germany already included in the Empire feels tied to Rome not on sentimental grounds, but because of a substantial participation. With an awareness of this tie, Goethe and George have made history relevant. And that is how we understand Europe.10

The Europe of Curtius, Thomas Mann, Johan Huizinga, Ortega y Gasset, and Benedetto Croce was presented as the heritage of a Roman-Germanic and Roman civilization on which had been grafted medieval Christianity, the cities, and the modern guilds; from this civilization had sprung the world of science, commerce, and the natural order of the spontaneous harmonizing of interests. However, that civilization had been threatened by the incursion of civil and political rights, laws, and regulations, and the reaction against political citizenship and democracy had converted itself into an elitist political conception—as Victor Klemperer wrote—indulgent toward authoritarianism: Stefan George, for instance, in the name of the “principle of the pioneer who follows the road,” had maintained the necessity of governing the mass society through Caesarism.11

The parallel between Marc Bloch and Ernst Kantorowicz proposed by Friedländer does not therefore appear convincing because of these deep differences in their cultural and political views.

In fact, Bloch traces the “strange defeat” back to the weakness of a republican democracy undermined by an indolent administration, “breathless politics,” the old opposition of the right-wing parties to republican values, and the rift between democracy and the army since the Dreyfus affair. French and European culture had undergone an irreversible, antidemocratic, oligarchic, irrationalistic shift:
Regarding the French, it has been said until now that they had sober and logical minds. Nevertheless, in order that there can be, after the new defeat, the moral and intellectual reform of this people—according to the words of Renan—it will first of all be necessary to teach them once again the old axiom of classical logic: A is A, B is B, therefore A is not B. . . . It will therefore be necessary that this people returns to the school of real freedom of thought.12

The meaning is clear: the intellectual causes of the defeat of 1940 were not to be sought—according to Bloch—only in military terms because democracy had been beaten much before then and the moral and intellectual crisis was at the root of the “most terrible collapse in our history.”13 In fact, democracy had been beaten because no one wanted to lay down his life to defend it and even the republican army had remained a body separated from the republican institutions.14

It was June 1940, the exact day, if I well remember, that the Germans entered Paris. In the Norman garden in which our General Staff, without any troops, was immersed in idleness, we were mulling over the causes of the disaster. “Should we therefore believe that history has deceived us?” murmured one of us.15

Bloch defined L’étrange défaite a “Platonic study.” The adjective perhaps refers to a choice of rationality and, in this sense, his attack against political irrationalism had a precedent in the study published in 1927 by Julien Benda, La trahison des clercs. It therefore seems significant that the latter, in republishing this text in 1946, should have taken up Bloch’s lesson: anti-Semitism and Jewish identity were also the crucial points in Benda’s reflection.

Benda had been mentioned in one of Bloch’s letters to Febvre, written in 1935. The writer was recognized by Bloch as an authority of the Nouvelle Revue Française, and in an earlier letter, of 1934, Febvre had compared his friend and collaborator Bloch with Benda, also referring to the attacks against him by the anti-Semitic nationalists.16 For the same anti-Semites, Benda, “a pale disciple of Kant, Comte, Renouvier,” was only “a representative of intellectual and metaphysical Judaism.”17

It had been a bitter dispute on both sides. In fact, Benda had accused Charles Maurras, Maurice Barrès, Georges Sorel, and the other anti-
democratic writers of being “philosophers of irrational emotion,” leading figures of “cultural Boulangism,” and irrationalist and intolerant nationalists. 18 (It is noteworthy that the publisher of Benda’s text was Daniel Halévy, who, even though he had been a militant Dreyfusard, had subsequently moved closer to Action Française). 19

According to Benda, the modern clerics had betrayed their true function as searchers after the truth by becoming the apologists “of the passions of the race and the nation,” and they had also become the propagandists of the “general hatred” that moved the “fiery and solid masses” of henchmen welded together in “leagues, associations, and political groups.”

All the most highly regarded moralists in Europe—Bourget, Barrès, Maurras, Péguy, D’Annunzio, Kipling, and the vast majority of German thinkers—have glorified men’s propensity to see themselves as members of a nation and a race (to the extent by which they differentiate themselves) and, at the same time, they have made them feel ashamed of any aspiration . . . general and transcendent. 20

Thus, Georges Sorel and Charles Péguy were also classified by Benda as “soldiers of thought,” 21 and, for the same reason, in his Quaderni del carcere, Gramsci juxtaposes Benda’s philosophy with that of Croce: “In a more organic and concise form, his conception of the intellectual can be compared with that expressed by Julien Benda in his book La trahison des clercs.” 22

But in 1946, the year of the first edition of L’étrange défaite, Benda republished La trahison des clercs, adding a new preface in which he indirectly but clearly quoted Bloch’s passage about the crisis of classical logic:

Dialectical materialism claims that reality remains the same while changing (inasmuch as it is the negation of every reality identical to itself even for a very short time), and wants to be in contradiction and therefore, whatever one may say, it results in a antirational philosophy. The thesis is formulated with all the desired precision in this statement of Plechanov, a sort of manifesto of the dogma: “To the degree in which some given combinations remain as they are, we must evaluate them in accordance with the formula ‘yes’ is ‘yes’ and ‘no’ is ‘no’ (A is A; B is B); but, when they change and cease to be such, we must turn to the logic of contradiction. We have to say ‘yes and no,’ they exist and they do not exist.” 23
So Benda—as Bloch had already done—contrasted the dialectics that mixes up opposites and the irrationalism that had transferred itself to socialist thought, reconsidering the “old axiom” of classical logic as a measure of mental health and an indispensable prerequisite to the recovery of clear thinking. In fact, Gramsci considered the literary critic a “critic of the philosophy of praxis,” a key formula by which Gramsci defined Marxism.

There is, however, a difference: in _L’étrange défaite_ Bloch also fiercely criticizes the theoretical dogmatism and political obtuseness of the communists and socialists but, at the same time, highlights their separation from Marx. Benda instead turns to a different model of criticism, analogous—as Gramsci had discerned—to that of Benedetto Croce (and, one might add, to that of Adolfo Omodeo).

And, for this reason, it is worth considering in greater detail Gramsci’s juxtaposing of Benda and Croce, whose extraordinary essay _Storia d’Europa nel secolo decimonono_, provides the evidence of both a resolute intellectual opposition to fascism and Gentile’s idealism, and the detachment from his own previously held views. In 1913, in fact, Croce had woven an apologia for Bismarck, the Second Reich, and the “German rebirth,” and, furthermore, in 1920 he had espoused the thesis of the opposition between _Kultur_ and Enlightenment democratic _Zivilisation_, formulated by Thomas Mann in _Beitrachtungen eines Unpolitischen_. And, in order to better understand this change in Croce’s position, it is also important to recall that he had started this revision of his political views after the Matteotti crisis, with the publication of the stand taken by professors, writers, and journalists against the policy of the fascist regime. Then the _Storia d’Italia_ and the study _Cultura germanica in Italia nell’età del Risorgimento_, published in 1928 and 1929, respectively, marked, also in theoretical and historiographic terms, a watershed. And the same was true for the _Storia d’Europa_: in order to present this book to Thomas Mann, Croce used the same formula, an “examination of conscience,” which Bloch would have used for _L’étrange défaite:_

You will see the underlying theme of this history. I also have to say that, in the course of it, there are interpretations of Prussian, Bismarckian, Treitschkian, nationalist history, etc. which are certainly not favorable, and that many of the criticisms are criticisms directed at myself, at my former ideas. And by now we have all made and are making our examination of conscience.
Croce here reveals himself to be perfectly aware of the responsibility of European cultures in having prepared the ground for illiberal regimes but, at the same time, he was also aware of the need to preserve the fundamental identity of a European civilization inspired by “liberal” values. He could not, however, soften his criticism of the Enlightenment and democracy, and he defined the age of the Restoration “the richest in developments” for nineteenth- and twentieth-century European history. Precisely in those years the national bourgeois had shown themselves capable of attaining power by using diplomacy, relying on the constitutional monarchies, and formulating the model of a new state. They had been able to do this without resorting to revolutionary terror and without liquidating the old ruling classes as had happened since 1792 in France. The new liberal elites had known how to reduce the old aristocracies to “castes” devoid of economic and political functions, and from Vincenzo Cuoco’s study of the defeat of the Neapolitan Revolution and Croce’s apologia for the age of the Restoration, Gramsci himself gleaned the paradigm of the “passive revolution.”

Intransigent Catholicism and socialism of Jacobin origin were, instead, considered the ideologies at the root of the authoritarian regimes of the twentieth century. And, like Croce, Omodeo maintained that there was cross-contamination between these two ideological camps:

This is not the moment to follow this development in all its particulars: it is, however, important to state how, apart from the process of incitement of the masses by the reactionaries, there was a spontaneous transition of ideas and attitudes from the extreme Left. . . . [In the opposite direction] the ideas of the traditionalism of Bonald and Lamennais renewed themselves in the myths of socialism, in both its utopian and Marxist forms. . . . And, with the increasing temporal distance from the great French revolutionary experience and the appeal of the ancien régime, they became more and more obstinate, going so far as to want to attempt ordered human life without freedom, under very different flags.  

But Omodeo’s observation seems to have a more self-critical and radical meaning. The same meaning was expressed by Alexandre Koyré, in those years, through an analogous view: it was necessary to go back to the intransigent reaction to the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen in order to explain the development of modern authoritarianism (and I can add: anti-Semitism, too). The main accusation was leveled at Louis de Bonald, who, since the beginning of the nineteenth century, had committed himself
to combating the Enlightenment, the new constitutional state, and the legal emancipation of the Jews. So Koyré's opinion seems to me a strong confirmation of my interpretation, and the question of the genealogy of illiberalism, authoritarianism, and anti-Semitism remains a crucial point.

Federico Chabod was more reluctant to indict romantic culture. For him, it was in the watershed of 1870 that one should identify the genesis of the “myth of force” and of the aggressive nationalism of the end of the century, which decreed the death “of the ideal of the small free countries in the free European harmony . . . dear to the Enlightenment and romanticism, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Adam Müller.”

In so writing, Chabod did not renounce the tradition of Croce and Omodeo, who shared the conception of European civilization of Curtius, Kantorowicz, and Mann. But his conception was not free of nationalist and romantic contagion: it was for this reason that Arnaldo Momigliano criticized Chabod when, in writing a commemoration of Carlo Antoni, he revealed “the unease of Italian antifascist intellectuals for their grounding in a romantic and nationalist culture.” On the contrary, Chabod tried to preserve not only Croce but all romantic moderate and democratic culture from the suspicion of having incubated the mental categories and rhetorical formulas of fascist authoritarianism. But Momigliano replied:

The fact is that around 1935 we were all still committed to studying and continuing to consider the problems of romanticism (German, above all, I could have added: but this qualification is obvious from the context and is not indispensable). . . . Around 1945 Italian culture was, instead, committed to restoring Enlightenment values. You yourself in your study about Europe, De Ruggiero in Ritorno alla Ragione, poor Colorni in his last years, Abbagnano, D’Entrèves in Diritto di Natura, Banfi, Cantimori, Venturi, Bobbio, and at times even Omodeo: only to mention some common friends, many alas have passed away. Unease is a vague definition. Perhaps you did not feel uneasy, psychologically: I felt it and I feel it now. Others have, like me, felt it: and De Ruggiero said so. In reading books like H. Blome, Der Rassengedanke in der Deutschen Romantik 1943, there was really little to laugh about, as you well know. I simply wanted to say: Romanticism with its ambiguities and contradictions becomes a problem and, I would insist, unease.

4) The decade of the Nazification of Italy. German pressure to permeate Fascism with Nazi ideas began in 1933 or perhaps even earlier. I’m not
sure. Already at the time of the arrest of Ginzburg and his companions, their Jewish origin was stressed. The rise of Interlandi *Tèvere*, Preziosi *Vita Italiana*, the Preziosi-Farinacci alliance, Evola’s departure from the “lunatic fringe,” if I remember correctly, are events which happened prior to 1938.\(^{35}\)

I think that Momigliano was absolutely right about the autonomous and autochthonous genealogy of Italian anti-Semitism before the Nazification of Italy, and his observation about various authors’ unease in the interwar years is also justified. Once again, in 1925, Thomas Mann had attacked democratic *Zivilisation*, namely, the French Revolution, as the “beginning of disintegration,” which had undermined “the epic idea” of the family and the community.\(^{36}\) And Curtius, in 1932, noted the “growing detachment” of French writers from the ideology of rights, the ideal of freedom, and the principle of Enlightenment civilization and also their return to their “ancestral origins which symbolize a centuries-old heritage and a sacred tradition.”\(^{37}\) Curtius cited Maurras but failed to mention the commitment of Maurras and his companions to false propaganda and the persecution of the Jews.

My comment on Curtius perhaps facilitates the resolution of the question posed by Friedländer about Bloch by going back to another of Momigliano’s texts. Here Momigliano demonstrated that one of the first studies by the historian of Indo-European cultures Georges Dumézil reveals evident traces of his sympathy for the ideas of Charles Maurras, Pierre Gaxotte, and anti-Semitic culture. And Carlo Ginzburg subsequently showed that Bloch also recognized Dumézil’s capacity for investigating the relationship between Hitler’s Germany and “the most ancient Indo-European past.”\(^{38}\) Momigliano and Ginzburg reveal that Bloch remained at a safe distance from the views of Curtius, George, Kantorowicz, and Barrès, and resolutely indicted the tradition of the intellectual right-wing parties dating back to the age of the counter-Enlightenment and to the birth of anti-Jewish propaganda.

I believe another document can also strengthen my interpretation: a text written by Jules Isaac, who offered one of the most incisive studies of the genesis of anti-Semitism.\(^{39}\) Before World War II, Isaac had been inspector general of education and president of the jury d’agrégation, but, in 1942, he was forced to live in hiding. So he devoted himself to studying the crisis of Athenian democracy in the fifth century: in his reconstruction, democracy, weakened internally since the time of the Peloponnesian War by the subversive action of the oligarchs, collapsed at the news of Alcibiades’ defeat in Sic-
ily, in 413 BC. For Maurras, who had fought in favor of the reestablishment of an oligarchic system, “the strange defeat” of the democratic fatherland was a “divine surprise.” The difference was that the defeat of 1940 started the return to a new old Europe, in which the persecution of the rights of the Jews could actually be carried out.

AN INTERPRETATION: EMANCIPATION, ASSIMILATION, AND THE BIRTH OF SOCIAL ANTI-SEMITISM

Friedländer’s response is perhaps not convincing because his question was not relevant to the text. In fact, in Bloch’s work there is no trace of a conflict of conscience between his proud and patriotic loyalty to his republican citizenship and his Jewish identity, which—according to Friedländer—Bloch would have perceived but not fully accepted. In fact, in the “examination of conscience of a Frenchman”—the wonderful last section of the Étrange défaite—the prevalent question concerns a different problem: the causes of the collapse of the democratic republic in 1940.

In Bloch’s view, these causes were not only or mainly military but could be traced back to the Republic’s institutional weakness, the delay in economic and technological innovation, and the serious diplomatic mistakes made by Clemenceau at the Versailles Peace Conference, whose effects had been aggravated by the 1929 financial crisis. Furthermore, these causes also included the rift that had split France since 1789 and, therefore, the hostility of many intellectuals, scientists, and academics toward republican democracy, which they considered the heir of the Revolution.

This conclusion by Marc Bloch leads again to my starting point: the text of Louis de Bonald. This hostility dated from the time of the intransigents’ war against the Enlightenment and the Declaration of the Rights of Man, but it had always and continuously renewed itself with the Restoration of 1815, the Assembly of Versailles, and, above all, the Dreyfus affair: critical periods of clashes between the two Frances that Bloch differentiates and analyzes in detail, going so far as to identify what he defines as the “tradition” of the counter-Enlightenment, antirepublican, and antidemocratic right-wing currents. And in these movements, hatred against the Jews had always been a crucial issue.

Bloch’s “examination of conscience” is in tune with Momigliano’s opinion about the responsibilities of the Italian intellectuals. I am referring, again, to Momigliano’s correspondence with Chabod, which I have examined. In these
letters, Momigiano states that, as late as the mid-1930s, his generation still appeared to be committed to perpetuating romantic (and nationalist) values, and that it was only in 1945 (that is, after the war waged by the antifascist Resistance) that everyone finally decided to “restore Enlightenment values.” The analogy between the positions of Bloch and Momigiano is absolutely evident and also echoes George L. Mosse’s reflection about the cultural origins of the Third Reich. It seems to me that the common denominator of the analyses by the three scholars is undoubtedly their criticism of romanticism or of the counter-Enlightenment, that is, of the long process of formation of culture, which had a determining effect in defining the structure of anti-Semitic ideologies: what I would like to stress is that the convergence between Bloch and Momigiano appears enlightening and extremely important in order to draw some conclusions about the nature of nineteenth- and twentieth-century anti-Jewish anticapitalism, taking as a starting point the document published by Bonald in 1806.

Now we have to rapidly reconsider the results of my philological study of each of the documents, their historical contextualization, and the considerations I have undertaken, with the aim of hypothesizing a conclusion. In this regard, let us read once again the judgment formulated by Hannah Arendt in 1933:

Today in Germany it seems Jewish assimilation must declare its bankruptcy. The general social antisemitism and its official legitimation affects in the first instance assimilated Jews, who can no longer protect themselves through baptism or by emphasizing their differences from Eastern Jews. . . . Specifically modern antisemitism, the antisemitism directed against assimilated Jews and which is as old as their assimilation itself, this form of antisemitism has always reproached the Jews with being the bearers of the Enlightenment. That basically was the charge of Grattenauer’s vulgar polemic of 1802 as well as Brentano’s consummately witty satire. . . . Assimilation always meant assimilation to the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment promised the Jews emancipation and above all provided them with arguments for demanding equal human rights, hence almost all of them became Enlightenment advocates. But the problem of Jewish assimilation begins only after the Enlightenment.

Arendt’s study is still one of the sharpest analyses of the social nature of anti-Semitism, which has been at the center of my research. Here Arendt clearly
states that the victory of Nazism constitutes the legitimization of almost a century and a half of social anti-Semitism and that modern social anti-Semitism is not the same as the ancient anti-Jewish tradition or the old discrimination, which could be avoided through baptism and forced conversion (even if this result was not always guaranteed, and here Arendt’s opinion has to be corrected in the light, above all, of the history of the persecution of converted Jews in Spain and Portugal).

I have to stress that, in Arendt’s text, modern anti-Semitism is defined as social and specifically directed against the assimilated and emancipated Jews of Western Europe and consequently against the Enlightenment as the culture of the universal equality of rights: “assimilation always meant assimilation to the Enlightenment.” My research confirms, I believe, Arendt’s incisive conclusion in the historical contexts of France, north-central Italy, and nineteenth-century Central Europe, even if I establish a closer link with the great economic transformation and the industrial revolution in continental Europe in the first half of the nineteenth century. It is not by chance that I use the same formula (“Great Transformation”) proposed by Karl Polanyi; I agree with his general thesis about the destructive character of the political imposition by liberal governments of the self-regulating market and hence the disastrous social consequences of the change of money, work, and the human being into goods. There is a relationship between the birth of the free-market society and anti-Jewish anticapitalism precisely because the Enlightenment was the apologia for the open society and considered technical and industrial civilization the fundamental stage in humanity’s progress. There is also a close link between the establishment of the free-market society and the Enlightenment, and this link explains the social nature of the new anti-Semitism after the legal assimilation of the Jews. In the case of Arendt’s Germany, Mosse’s study—of the process of assimilation and emancipation of the Jews in Germany, from the period of the Enlightenment up to the end of the Weimar Republic, and of the interiorization of the categories of German culture (starting from the central one of “Bildung”) by the Jewish minority—represents an excellent confirmation of this hypothesis.44

After the pioneering works by Hannah Arendt and George L. Mosse, in the last two decades research about emancipation and assimilation (or Jewish integration) in Europe has increased enormously thanks to studies by many scholars, including the masterpieces by David Sorkin, Jonathan Frankel, Steven J. Zipperstein, and Amos Funkestein. But sometimes the Shoah has cast a distorting shadow, and this has been well expressed by David Sorkin:
In the rise of Nazism, the Holocaust and the Establishment of the State of Israel, history appears to have delivered a negative verdict on emancipation and assimilation. There has been a strong temptation not only to make both pejoratives, but to conflate them, so that emancipation has no possible outcome other than self-destruction or destruction by others.\textsuperscript{45}

The substantially negative historical judgments of the experience of assimilation have not, however, stifled the development of studies that concentrate on the social dialectic between the European national states and their Jewish minorities and, consequently, on the cultural conflicts within the different Jewish minorities imbued with the Enlightenment ideals of freedom and the equality of rights. In Europe, the different “Jewish nations” (which in the society of the ancien régime had constituted separate corporations, subject to restrictions and discrimination but nevertheless having rights or “privileges”) sometimes accepted the ideal of emancipation but in other cases opposed the reform and transformation of their autonomous community institutions and political structures into mere religious institutions.\textsuperscript{46} In this case, the Jews defended their religious traditions and even their separateness, which represented the condition of their protection by the authorities. (In fact, in ancien régime society had displayed a certain degree of openness toward Jewish communities and corporations precisely because of their separateness from the Christian society).

So the interpretation of anti-Semitism becomes more complex. Historians gather and take into account all the new relevant material, sources, and perspectives about these realities and are also obliged to render the mass of material into a coherent object of thought and judgment: this is why studies on anti-Semitism seem to swing back and forth with steady regularity, now rendering justice to new sources, now trying to restore a coherent interpretation. It seems that, sometimes, every advance in research that adds new complications to our understanding can potentially threaten our clarity about what happened, and, in any case, many new documents, therefore many new facts, make the complete picture of the events of that historical period more complex.\textsuperscript{47} But they cannot exempt the historian from proposing a rational interpretation.

I therefore have to ask myself the crucial question as to whether the acquisition of new knowledge, based on new documents, forces me to modify my interpretation of anti-Semitism as a reaction against assimilation and the free market economy, and therefore against the Enlightenment: from this social
point of view, the history of anti-Jewish anticapitalism and therefore of the “socialism of the imbecile,” as I have presented it, appears to be a process of social (that is cultural) events that involve structures deeply rooted in European culture and reveal the Jewish support for legal emancipation but also opposition to the Enlightenment enterprise of assimilation.

In other words, Arendt was perfectly right in considering Nazi social anti-Semitism as the conclusion of the historical journey that began with the Enlightenment and its battle for emancipation, the “regeneration” (régénération) and the “improvement” (verbesserung) of the moral customs of the Jews in the mid-1700s. All the protagonists of the events of the emancipation of 1791—Honoré de Mirabeau, Clermont-Tonnerre, Henri Grégoire, Malesherbes—had been struck by the reception of the clash, in Germany, among the leading figures of the Aufklärung and the Haskalah and the anti-Jewish opposition. Following the publication of Gotthold Ephraim Lessing’s first drama, Die Juden, in 1749, the solution of tolerance based on the “deistic” acknowledgment of the existence of a common foundation to all religions had the positive consequence of rehabilitating the traditional representation of the Jews but also of provoking bitter and virulent reactions in defense of the existing law, that is, the “privilegium de non tolerandis Judaeis.”

Lessing’s aesthetic and religious ideas had an enormous influence on the German Aufklärung. But Johan David Michaelis, the greatest Old Testament scholar, absolutely rejected his thesis, holding that among the Jews there definitively could not be “an even generic form of honesty, all the more so because almost all the people have to live by commerce, a trade that offers, compared to others, greater opportunities and temptations for deceit.” Michaelis made this drastic judgment in 1754. The European Orientalist was a convinced supporter of the thesis that the Talmudic tradition had had drastically negative consequences on the morality of European Jews: it had made estranged them from the Christian West (this thesis was also held by the convert from Judaism Johan Andreas Eisenmenger).

But the pamphlet that had started the debate in the German states (and above all in Prussia) about Jewish emancipation had been triggered by contingent motives that take us back to the problem I examined at the beginning of this study: the polemic against “usury” (that is, the Alsatian Jews and their practices of money lending). In 1780, at the request of the Jewish representative of that region, Herz Cerfberr, the Protestant writer Christian Wilhelm Dohm collaborated with Mendelssohn in drafting a memorial defending the Alsatian Jews, who were threatened by popular hatred aroused by the success
of a pamphlet by the nobleman François-Joseph-Antoine Hell that accused them of usury. Hell had gone so far as to write about an alleged Jewish plot at the expense of French Christians.  

Dohm was a Protestant writer who had already clashed with Voltaire, but his collaboration with Mendelssohn was not successful. So in 1781 (the following year) he resumed his action in favor of the Jews by publishing his most famous text, *Über die bürgerliche Verbesserung der Juden*. Using Enlightenment principles and *physiocratique* political economics, Dohm proposed the abolition of all the legal restrictions that prevented the Jews from having access to productive agricultural and industrial activities and state administration. The national character of the Jews, according to Dohm, should be considered only the result of their sufferings, and their “naturalization” would modify it much more deeply than had been achieved in England by the 1753 Jew Act. Dohm’s proposals, as had those of Mendelssohn, provoked hard rejections, all hinging on the thesis that the Jewish people could not change its nature, that of a people who lived by means of commercial deceit and disloyalty. Nevertheless, these reactions cannot be considered manifestations of the new social anti-Semitism; as Funkestein has explained perfectly, it was only after the turning point of emancipation, therefore of the French Revolution, that the new anti-Jewish anticapitalism expressed the need to recognize and distinguish, once again, the Jews as a different *social* body after they had become invisible with emancipation: “The Jews ought to be made recognizable again: their emancipation was a partial or total mistake because—want it or not, they are not capable of true assimilation.”

In Jewish German culture (and therefore above all in the work of Mendelssohn, which certainly constituted its highest expression) the process of reform had instead been conceived as a process revolving around state institutions as guarantors of a choice of integration within separation. And even in Dohm’s proposal, however, it was not clear whether *verbesserung* (improvement) had to be the result of the acceptance by the institutions or of the Jews’ decision to change themselves and their moral customs. Even among the Germans favorable to emancipation many prejudices remained, and there was a lack of precise political indications on the part of the enlightened German reformers. Johann Gottfried Herder thought that the solution could not be political but lay in the renewal of relationships between the different Bible religions, which would have eliminated the differences between Christians and Jews, thereby also enabling the latter to make a positive contribution to the state. But even Herder had to recognize that it was precisely the historical
events that the Jews had experienced that had made this people “a diffuse re-
public of deceivers,” and that it would therefore have been necessary to eradi-
cate the laws of the state that made it impossible to improve and change the
character of the Jews. With this aim in view, it was also necessary to reform
the Mosaic law, which had always mixed up the moral-religious and political
spheres.57

It was not like this in France: the protagonists of the legal battle for emanci-
pation, which began in September 1791, in the last days of the Constituent As-
sembly—Honoré de Mirabeau, Clermont-Tonnerre, Grégoire, and Malesher-
bes, the author of the decree of emancipation of Protestant subjects passed in
1787—had all been strongly affected by the echoes of the debate beyond the
Rhine, but they trusted in the instruments of state: legislation and the law.58
Also in 1787, Honoré de Mirabeau had published his study Sur Mendelssohn et
la réforme politique des juifs, and he continued to play, together with Brissot,
an extraordinarily important role of mediation with the Aufklärung, as well as
propagating the views of Haskalah and of enlightened and reforming Jewish
culture.59 Thanks to them, the texts of Lessing and Dohm (the latter’s work
was translated into French in 1783 by Jean de Bornouilli) became famous in
the kingdom of France.60 And in fact the works of Mendelssohn, Dohm, Les-
sing, and Mirabeau were used by Grégoire in the work that gave impetus to
the political action that led to emancipation, the Essai sur la régénération phy-
sique, morale et politique des juifs, with which the abbot won the prize in the
competition organized in 1788 by the Académie Royale des Sciences et des
Arts of the city of Metz.61

However, Grégoire’s texts revealed all the contradictions of the Aufklärung
and of the Jewish Enlightenment Haskalah, just like those of the chrétiens
célairés, both Protestant and Catholic, who shared, with the Enlightenment
scientists, biologists and doctors, the conviction that the social and political
improvement (verbesserung) of the customs (moeurs) of the Jews would also
produce their moral redemption and therefore la bonheur et l’utilité générale;
the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen laid down the legal con-
ditions in order to draft the new droit de cité also for the Jews, and these legal
conditions would have produced their régénération morale, permitting them
to be assimilated in Christian society.62

The Jewish nation had to be reformed before individual Jews could be-
come citizens, and the political reform certainly envisaged emancipation
but also new restrictions. If the Jews were an avid people, it was because of
the discrimination that had forced them, almost exclusively, to engage in
commerce. But commerce (here Grégoire is alluding to Voltaire), which “tends to eliminate national characters and homologate them[,] has left almost intact the national character of the Jewish people . . . ; this kind of work, since it makes possible the circulation of money among them [the Jews], gives them the chance to practice usury and alter the value of money.” Commerce puts the Jews in contact with many citizens, giving them a “new means to conspire with concealed maneuvers and exercise mendacious practices thus expanding more and more their malignant influence.” Grégoire admitted that the proliferation of usurious practices had occurred above all in Alsace to the detriment of Christian peasants, who were reduced to a state of beggary. It was therefore necessary to force the Jews, by law, to “faire les échanges à prix comptant,” as well as “to prohibit them to do those kinds of job, as for instance administering hotels . . . , that facilitate dangerous manipulations. . . . We should expel them from functions such tax collectors, sheriffs’ tax, cashier, customs officials, procurators and other functions that make it easier to practice concussion, ill-gotten gains, smuggling. This is because we should never forget the character of the people we want to correct.”

The Catholic religion explains how the philosophe chrétien Grégoire and the reactionary and counter-Enlightenment ideologist Bonald could share the same negative opinion about “Jewish commerce.” In fact, Grégoire even approvingly quoted the anti-Jewish text used by Bonald, L'affaire present des juifs d'Alsace, published in 1779 by Jean-François Hell.

In 1763, after the end of the Seven Years' War, texts about the controversies on legal emancipation and assimilation spread across Europe, but after the revolutionary emancipation, in 1791, the documents and the controversies spread from the new revolutionary France to the rest of Europe. In 1799, David Friedländer, a student of Moses Mendelssohn, sent (initially anonymously) to the Lutheran pastor of Berlin Wilhelm Abraham Teller a compromise proposal between the religions heirs of the Bible in the name of “natural religion”; Friedländer asked for the emancipation of the Jews in exchange for their acceptance of baptism, without any obligation, on their part, of respecting Christian rites that could be in contrast with the natural religion. But the Swiss Catholic Jean-André De Luc immediately grasped the opportunity to once again attack the Aufklärung and defend the traditionalist position of the political function of religion in the Prussian state. And in 1806, on various occasions, Grégoire also mentioned De Luc's texts, without obviously taking into consideration the political proposals antithetical to his own, but sharing the drastic negative judgment on Friedländer's proposal.
Three years earlier, in 1803, Carl Grattenauer had unleashed his violent anti-Jewish campaign, taking up De Luc's accusations against Friedländer.\(^{68}\) In short, between 1803 and 1806, the production of printed works (pamphlets, treatises, newspapers) about the condition of European Jews had become a permanent feature of the new public opinion, above all after the peace of Luneville (February 1801) between the French and German states. In the texts of southern German writers (many of whom were Francophiles), the model of legal emancipation based upon Enlightenment criteria became the central question. Consequently, the economic function of the Jews in the commercial balance of imports and exports of the German states (increased by the ban on Jews investing in real estate) became a crucial issue. And the issue of the economic function of the Jews also soon concerned the discussion about the “commercial” and “usurious” nature of Jewish morality. So Grattenauer was the mainstay of the attack against the Francophiles C. J. Kleiber and C. Grund, first, with an anonymous review of a book written by the jurist Christian Ludwig Paalzow, then, with a pamphlet against the financial power (Geldmacht) of the “Jewish sect,” entitled Erklärung an das Publikum über meine Schrift: wieder die Juden (Explanation to the readers about my essay “Against the Jews”).\(^{69}\)

The aristocracy of money (geld aristokratie) as capable of damaging the national economy was also the subject of a work by Friedrich Buchholz, an author, on the other hand, who accepted the idea of the improvement of the condition of the Jews but not of their immediate legal emancipation (that, on the contrary, would have produced a “money despotism” [Gelddespotismus]).\(^{70}\) But different attitudes in the German states identified in the Jewish “monopoly” of commerce an archaic obstacle to the free market that continued to cause artificial price increases of goods, and many thought that the abolition of discrimination, of the “tax on the person” (Leibzoll), and of their privileges would, in any case, have favored productivity and the market.\(^{71}\)

As I have repeated in the course of this chapter, after 1791, legal emancipation decidedly modified the social context, in France and, after the Napoleonic occupation, throughout the French Empire, and in 1806 the prospect of the convocation of a general assembly of the representatives of the Jewish communities of the empire and of a possible further openness toward them created the conditions for the new intransigent Catholic reaction and offensive. The lawyer Louis Poujol and Viscount Louis de Bonald seemed to be taking up again the old theses of François Hell, but in fact they invented a new anti-Semitism as an anti-Jewish anticapitalist paradigm explicitly directed against the consequences of legal emancipation.
Although Bonald’s article did not have many readers in the German states, it was often linked with the issue of German Jews, and it received firm replies from Grégoire and a prominent Jew from Bordeaux, Moses Peixotto. They were both convinced supporters of the unity of the human species and thought that emancipation would eliminate, in one or two generations, the moral differences between the different cultures. But Bonald’s article had a decisive effect on Napoleon Bonaparte: the assembly of prominent figures of the empire took place in the presence of two government commissioners and Portalis, an old adversary of Mirabeau; two months later, on March 17, 1808, two imperial decrees reorganized the Jewish religion on the basis of the model of the Protestant consistories, and, finally, a third decree, making an exception to the Code Civil and the general law on commerce of March 13, 1807, curtailed loans with interest, permitting the Jews to offer them only after the issuing of a license by the prefect of their place of residence (and in accordance with the view expressed by the synagogue). So Bonald had obtained an important result: the legal necessity that the Jews, unlike any other French citizen, had to get a special authorization in order to trade and or offer loans, after having shown that they were not involved in usury. For the first time, since 1791, the equality of citizens before the law had been questioned.

The new citizenship had in fact been based, in the first place, on residence (ius soli), descent from French parents (even if birth had occurred abroad), the exercise of a profession or ownership of property within the frontiers of the state, and, finally, the declaration of loyalty to the constitutional principles, the serment civique. On this legal basis, discrimination, differences, and the privileges of the community had been abrogated:

The National Assembly, after having considered the necessary conditions of citizenship for becoming electors as defined by the Constitution, and [after having considered] that every men enjoying this condition, having made a civic ought and committed himself to the obligations imposed by the constitution, [declares that these men] have the right to all privileges that the constitution guarantees; [the National Assembly] will revoke all the exceptions and the reservations included in previous norms pertaining to the Jews who have made an ought. This ought will be considered as a renunciation to all the exceptions and privileges previously held in their favor.

In 1808, in fact, those very rights automatically granted on the basis of the serment civique were partially revoked in the case of the Jews, who would have
been able to exercise the profession of merchants only on the basis of an authorization from the prefect and a certification (issued by the municipal administration) attesting with certainty that this merchant was not involved in usury. And, if in Europe Bonald's text, probably, did not enjoy a widespread reception, many of his other pamphlets about social economics, hostile to the free market in safeguarding the peasant families, were read and appreciated by many intransigent Catholic and Protestant writers—Frédéric Ozanam, Padre Taparelli d’Azeglio, Félicité di Lamennais, Ludwig von Haller, Donoso Cortés, and Alban de Villeneuve-Bargemont—and they were still being quoted by Frédéric Le Play at the end of the Second Empire.

Naturally, the appreciation that Bonald had expressed for some of Voltaire's writings against the Jews had been purely manipulative. The real meaning of Voltaire's anti-Jewish controversy was, above all, his radical criticism of every form of revealed religion, fanaticism, and intolerance: all incomprehensible phenomena from the point of view of public national ethics, which Voltaire had based on scientific principles, Newton's physics, and Locke's universalism. If, therefore, the old interpretations of Voltaire's thought proposed by Léon Poliakov and Arthur Hertzberg (or the spread of anti-Jewish prejudices among quite a few philosophes as a key to the cultural genealogy of modern anti-Semitism) are unacceptable, it remains true that the Enlightenment project of a political doctrine of universal equality and the universality of rights proved to be partial and incomplete precisely because the Jewish minority remained an unresolved problem. The texts of the philosophes have to be interpreted in their historical context, but the presence of anti-Jewish stereotypes, for example, in the utopian literature of the Enlightenment, in any case makes their interpretation an arduous task. I will try to show this through another document.

In 1770, Louis-Sébastien Mercier published a utopian novel: *L’an 2440, rêve s’il en fut jamais.* Mercier's book depicted Paris in the distant future, transformed by progress in science, economic conditions, and city planning, and in contrast he presented Versailles abandoned and in ruins, inhabited by the old King Louis XIV by then decrepit, a bankrupt sovereign contrite about his errors. The work was republished in 1786, considerably enlarged, and in 1799 an identical edition was published, in which Mercier easily claimed the role of prophet of the Revolution. Among the chapters added in 1786, chapter 79 dealt with the Jews.

Mercier imagined that in 2440 there would be the wonderful triumph of the natural and rational religion of the Être Suprême, that is, the establishment
of universal brotherhood and tolerance of all religions, but his Enlightenment and utopian universalism retained many marked instances of intolerant and discriminatory Christian universalism. Mercier tried to take a stand in relation to the German debate and to the French discussion of the mid-1780s, distancing himself from theses of the assimilationists: the main obstacle to assimilation was—according to him—precisely commercial activity. The particular ability of the Jews in internal and international trade, therefore in usury and financial speculation, had turned them into a cosmopolitan community, which made them resist integration in the nation, in the fraternité nationale, while instead “the spirit of Christianity orders, I think, to hold all men as brothers, regardless their government and their religions.”

Mercier described the relationship between commerce and Jewish non-involvement in the nation: “We owe to the Jews the invention of the bill of exchange that protects commerce against every violence and saves it in all parts of the globe. After this invention the wealthy and the merchant have no longer a fatherland; they transport their fortune wherever they think convenient; and the cosmopolitan person, who has all the means to increase his wealth, does no longer produce generous or patriotic ideas.”

Precisely for this reason Mercier had envisaged the persistence in 2440 of discrimination, necessary to counteract the excessive power of the Jews and even their plan to control the state: “The Jews, who submit indifferently under any monarch, hold in their hands all the wealth of the nation in many states and cities.” After all Grégoire himself had wondered whether the “future will perhaps justify the negative predictions by M. Mercier.”

ANTICAPITALIST ANTI-JEISH LITERATURE

But in none of the texts in German, French, or Italian published before emancipation did the controversy against Jewish trade, usury, and the cosmopolitanism assume the nature of the new anti-Jewish anticapitalism because this modern controversy could only have arisen after legal emancipation, even if the preconditions were present in the clash with the Enlightenment and in the assimilation of the 1770s, 1780s, and 1790s.

Bonald’s text was, of course, in debt to the typical ideas of the controversies of the preceding decades, but it was the first to attack the decrees of emancipation of 1791. The attack led to the convocation of the assembly of the prominent Jews of the French Empire and the kingdom of Italy and to the limita-
tions of the freedom of the Jews decreed in 1808: for this reason it can be con-
sidered the starting point of a new paradigm.

In some cases, the reception of Bonald’s text by other authors has been
documented and the relationship has been philologically ascertainable; in
other cases, instead, I have had to confine myself to establishing a correspon-
dence in content and form, a morphological connection, as I have not been
able to prove a direct relationship between the authors or the direct reception
of the text. But, precisely for this reason, in these cases, the homology be-
tween the contents is even more surprising.

I did not confine my research to a monographic approach on the work
of a single author, and I have also tried to avoid too many general concepts
or the recurring temptation to consider anti-Judaism (barely distinguished
from anti-Semitism) as an ultra-millenarian or a timeless tradition. I have
defined the common code of the texts in order to characterize this specific
type of anti-Semitic literature: specific words and specific details have served
as starting and connecting points (Ansatzpunkte, in Auerbach’s language) be-
tween different authors’ texts and between the political parlance of different
movements: those specific points have—I hope—provided the seeds for my
path through nineteenth- and twentieth-century literature, and its generaliz-
ing potential seems to me absolutely important in order to define this variant
(anti-Jewish anticapitalism) in the larger anti-Semitic literature. The connec-
tion between Bonald’s texts and the literature of what Karl Marx defined as
reactionary or feudal socialism is shown: namely, I believe that I have proved
that from Bonald’s text and from intransigent propaganda it is possible to fol-
low a path through neo-Christian or socialist texts that leads to the paradigm
of anti-Jewish anticapitalist literature of the nineteenth-century populist
movements and fascism.

There is, in fact, a code common to all the anticapitalist texts directed
against the Jews: “In the end, all that is left of bourgeois traits is that they
are ‘Jewish.’ In the end, only Jews are crassly materialistic, unpatriotic, revo-
lutionary, destructive, speculative and deceitful, living only for the moment
and lacking any historical ties to the nation. . . . All antisemitic arguments
are feudal in origin.”84 And the code common to the anti-Semitic socialist
associations and to the theologians of the feudal-military order was protec-
tion from the modern free-market economy: to obtain this protection, some
socialists upheld intolerant ideas, as George Duchêne, a student of Proudhon
did, approving of a pogrom that had occurred in imperial Russia in 1869 and
an interpretation of anti-jewish anticapitalism
describing it as a reaction by “honest people” against the Jews, “parasites, usurers, and exploiters of the people.” Using these terms, Duchêne was simply continuing the lesson of Bonald and of his master Proudhon, whose students posthumously published, in 1883, *Césarisme et Christianisme*. In that text Jewish economic morality was once again defined as “entirely negative, entirely usurious,” and the free market and the industrial society were considered specific products of Jewish culture. There is no doubt that Proudhon’s work constituted a crucial connection among Bonald, intransigent Catholic literature, and “feudal socialism” (using Marx’s incisive definition).

Edmund Silberner, in his pioneering research, understood the historical importance of Proudhon’s views, but he did not pursue the implications of Proudhon’s texts or, consequently, their genealogy from the social economics of Villeneuve-Bargemont and Bonald, though it is highly probable that exactly through Hugues-Félicité Robert de Lammenais and Villeneuve-Bargemont, Proudhon came to know of Bonald’s 1806 text against the Jews. Late-nineteenth-century syndicalists and nationalists always associated Proudhon and working-class mutualism with the defense of the peasant family by Bonald, Lamennais, and Joseph Marie De Gerando, as Proudhon’s anti-capitalism was in good measure the same as that of the apologists of the traditional agricultural society.

Another book by Proudhon, *Confessions d’un révolutionnaire*, was like a reflection on the tragedy of the 1848 republic and “the examination of conscience” of a socialist who had been more critical of the leftist republicans like Ledru-Rollin or Marrast, and of the socialists themselves, than of the old liberal monarch Louis Philippe: for Proudhon, the real revolution consisted in the abolition of state, government, property, and parties, while instead Saint-Simon, Fourier, and the working-class representatives on the Commission du Luxembourg were “all partisans of the organization of economy by the state, by the capital, by any kind of authority . . . instead of teaching people self-organization.” Proudhon was a socialist who criticized the modern bourgeoisie as a class “pour sois” and “chez soi,” only capable of interpreting the principle of laissez-faire as “liberté de tous les affaires” and, therefore, “de tous les crimes.” But in these views, Proudhon expressed himself as a traditionalist, as Bonald’s companion.

Nor did he have any difficult in taking up Toussenel’s criticisms:

The basic principle of the liberal government of the July Monarchy, founded for and by the middle class, was property and capital; it was
bank-cracy. This is what M. Toussenel, the most witty among the socialist writers, has understood and expressed in the title of his curious book, *Les juifs, rois de l’époque.*

So there is documentary evidence of numerous traces of Bonald’s categories and of Catholic social economics, but the echo of the reception of Toussenel’s text is striking.

Apart from Proudhon’s works, there is also important evidence in Pierre Leroux’s texts and in those of the members of other socialist families, starting from the 1846 work *L’organisation de la liberté* by Théodore Dézamy: in the same year, Leroux published in *La revue sociale* a long text focusing on the social conflict between the universalism of rights, common to liberals and socialists, and the “selfishness” and “particularism” of the Jews, the people that embody the “nation of merchants and usurers.”

Balzac had instead followed the opposite path, transferring his infatuation for the “socialist” Saint-Simon to De Maistre (whom he considered the inventor of the Caesarist dictatorship, which he liked immensely), and to remorseless criticism of the world of commerce: *Le curé du village* is, as has been seen, his story based on the conflict between the honest society of rural families and Jewish capitalist usury.

Here we find ourselves in front of another connecting point: through the texts of Proudhon, Dézamy, Leroux, and Toussenel we have certainly entered the realm of socialist literature, and we also have the possibility of a further generalization concerning the working-class and European socialist movement and its many different and contrasting cultures and practices. The existence of a first rift in the history of the socialist movement probably dates from the origins of socialist literature, between the second and third decades of the nineteenth century, and it was probably the result of diverging choices with regard to the new market and industrial society. In contrast with the utopian tradition based on the myth of the state of nature and the common ownership of the land, modern socialism was instead a culture produced by the consequences of the Great Transformation and of the industrial revolution. Therefore, the working-class socialist movement advocated coordination between the industrial economy and state institutions through legislation and the action of new social bodies, trade associations, and trade unions. It has been well explained by one of greatest historians of European socialism, Élie Halévy, that precisely because of this, socialist literature, from the beginning, had an internal contradiction between platforms and programs in tune with
the principles defined by the universalism of rights, established with the 1789 Revolution, and those social practices and doctrines that extolled the role of the state and trade-union structures, often assimilated with the old corporations of the ancien régime: from the beginning there were liberal forms of “socialism” that were opposed to the hierarchical, organizing, statist “socialism.”

Saint-Simon was the inventor of this second form because he wanted an organic socialist society like the society of the ancien régime state corporations but governed by the technocracy of the bankers, scientists, and entrepreneurs. And in my studies I have deciphered all the influences also exercised by the Catholic and Christian counter-Enlightenment on the work of Saint-Simon and of his young secretary, Auguste Comte. But despite this, the Saint-Simonians were attacked by the other decidedly anti-Semitic socialists, who accused them of being the valets des juifs, the servants of the Jews, the new rois de l’époque.

In fact, Leroux’s text used this phrase for its title, as did the two-volume work Les juifs, rois de l’époque, by Alphonse Toussenel, published the preceding year by La Libraire Phalansterienne (the publisher of the Fourierists). Toussenel indicted individualistic economic ethics, which he regarded as deriving from cosmopolitan finance with alleged Jewish roots (“Behind the Protestants there is always Jewish power”), and his manifesto, addressed “aux ministres, aux socialistes, aux prêtres, aux peuples, au roi,” concealed a nucleus of solidly socialist reactionary thought. However, it should be borne in mind that Fourier, in 1808 (the year of the Napoleonic decree), had stated that all evils are due to the reforms crafted by the philosophes of the eighteenth century; their most negative outcome was the Jewish emancipation. This is the origin of all the social malaise. . . . The settlement of a thief or a Jew it is an enough condition for disorganizing the entire body of the merchants of large cities and drives to even most honest people to commit crimes.

As I proved, Toussenel’s text, like Proudhon’s, was a milestone of anti-Jewish anticapitalism. Although it formally looks back to Fourier, it also appears to derive from the traditionalist paradigm because it repeats Bonald’s accusation against the philosophes, the men of the Enlightenment, the economists, all guilty of having begun the campaign in favor of the Jews and of having adopted a utilitarian conception of politics. Hutcheson, Smith, and Bentham were the theoreticians of the “nouvelle usure.”
Toussenel’s text was republished by Davin, a publisher from Nantes, the following year, and in the preface there was a revealing new reference to the laws about commercial licenses passed in 1808 and to Bonapart’s decree against Jewish merchants: “From 1808, when all the people were thinking only about waging war, a man of genius announced, names and described financial feudality while speaking about the unknown dangers coming from the permit to sell and buy.”

The economic decadence, which is traced back to the crisis of agricultural society and to large-scale commerce, was triggered by the speculation of Anglo-Dutch Jews in league with the internal Jewish financial elites, and Jewish anti-national capitalism exploited the measures of the Revolution (the confiscation of large aristocratic estates, the sale of the church’s assets). The criticism of the modern society born from the revolution of rights is undertaken from the point of view of tradition but also of the workers: “The Englishmen, the Hollanders, the citizens of Geneva learn how to read the words of God from the same book of the Jews, and consider the laws of equality and the rights of the workers with the same despite as the Jews.”

It is easy to understand that the rhetorical approach of the socialist Fourierist Toussenel made full use of the arguments of the intransigent reaction and of anti-Jewish anticapitalism: the Enlightenment and the universalism of rights were the last heirs of the spirit of free enterprise triggered by the Calvinist and Huguenot ethic, but the Protestants were as hostile to social justice and to the workers’ needs as they were to those of the old aristocracy. For this reason, Toussenel wrote that they are the perfect heirs of Judaism: Protestants and Jews, thanks to emancipation after 1787 and 1791, have controlled public opinion in order to favor trafficking and rigging the market, blocked every defense of royalty and of the people, put the producer and the consumer at their mercy so that in France the Jew reigns and governs (“le juif règne et gouverne en France”).

And Toussenel adds, “I guard the reader that this word is rendered in its popular meaning: Jew as banker or merchant: Jew is any reader of the Bible.” And the Bible is the book that assures “that God conceded to the servants of his law the monopoly of the exploitation of the earth”—in the art of profiting the English, the Dutch, the Genevans, and the Jews used the same help as “religious fanaticism.”

In order to wage the political battle against the “Protestant” elites and their eminent personality in the 1830s, François Guizot, Toussenel did not hesitate to use the rhetoric of anti-Protestant and anti-Jewish Catholic intransigence: “History will tell one day whether the famous principle of Reformation, the
right to free exam, was accepted as an idea of progress as generally is said or instead it represents a means to substitute the infallibility of the individual to the infallibility of the pope, who is the personification of the church and the vicar of Christ.\textsuperscript{95} It is from De Maistre that Toussenel derived the image of the “chain of errors of the moderns”:

Protestants of all confessions, your presumed religious and spiritual revolution of 1520 is only and simply an insurrection of merchant people, of nations of traffickers, who go back to the Bible because they feel uneasy with the morals of the Gospel.

On the contrary, Bossuet is described as the \textit{grand penseur} who renewed the classical (Tacitus) and Christian (Augustine, Chrysostom, etc.) anti-Jewish tradition.

The Bible is the catechism and the code of the slanders. \ldots The Jews are never victims if not for the time when they become persecutors. \ldots The state that concedes imprudently to them citizenship creates its future masters \ldots; France is already a slave of the Jews.\textsuperscript{96}

Once again, the controversial targets of anti-Jewish anticapitalism are assimilation, emancipation, and the Enlightenment: the capital error had been emancipation, which introduced in the French nation a foreign body, the Jewish nation: “nations of usurers and unproductive Patriarchs, not civilized \ldots do not recognize any sovereign and think possible all tricks when they have to manipulate those who don’t believe in their God.”\textsuperscript{97}

A financial plot would have induced the Orléanist government to take those legal measures that had created the conditions for the constitution of real Jewish monopolies in the banking system, the press, and the strategic sector of railway transport: being unable to raise the necessary resources to complete the construction of the rail network in the north, the government, following the advance of the necessary capital to finance the enterprise, had in fact granted as an exclusive concession to the Rothschild group the management of the rail network, guaranteeing it the resulting profits; this financial mechanism represented—according to Toussenel—the insidious system through which “the Jews” had begun to conquer positions of absolute privilege in the country’s economy through the strategic control of the communi-
cations system. From those positions, the Jews would also easily gain control of military power.\textsuperscript{98}

Toussenel’s text can therefore be considered the first coherent proposal for a socialized economy based on the expropriation of “Jewish capital.” In fact, Toussenel did not propose the abolition of capitalist ownership of the means of production, or of other forms of private property, but he anticipated the idea of legislative measures in the economic field exclusively directed at the expropriation of the wealth of the big Jewish banks, as well as laws of a discriminatory type “on a proportional basis.” All this prefigured the economic measures and the discrimination that would be reproposed, at the end of the nineteenth century, by the most extremist French anti-Semites, Georges Vacher de Lapouge,\textsuperscript{99} and later by the German Nazis and the Hungarian, Austrian, and Romanian nationalists and the Italian fascists. For this reason, Édouard Drumont considered Bonald, Toussenel, and Proudhon his “brilliant precursors.”

In 1886, \textit{Les juifs, rois de l’époque} was reprinted with a preface by Gabriel de Gonet and many quotations of Drumont’s praise for the work.\textsuperscript{100} For Bonald, Toussenel, Proudhon, and Drumont, the Jewish \textit{féodalité financière} had reached the positions of power in the country, and by the end of the nineteenth century, the \textit{juiverie} was identified with the elites of financial capitalism. This identification made possible the projection on to the \textit{juif} (in the singular) of the old image of usurer and trafficker, the symbol of the enemy within the national community of workers.

I have found important connecting points among the texts of 1806, 1830, and 1845, but the repetition of inevitably similar formulae could also be explained by the persistence of the same mechanism in the economic crises of 1787–1789, 1830, and 1845–1848: poor wheat harvests and the depression in the fundamental industrial sector of textiles. But in 1845–48, the explosion of the financial crisis also overwhelmed the metallurgical industry, and the measures passed in 1841 to reunify private and public local credit with the aim of financing the construction of the railway network came to nothing. Those projects also included “the laws regarding the mechanism of repaying private investments by conceding management rights to the private financial backers,” with whom Toussenel had taken issue.

It is important to stress that the socialist-republican and conservative press felt that the crisis was caused by the parliamentary maneuvers that favored “donations of credit” to the speculators,\textsuperscript{101} even if everyone naturally wanted
to indicate a different guilty party (in 1847, for Ledru-Rollin, for example, it was an undefined “aristocracy of money, the feudality of finance, the caste of the contractors,” who had acted in favor of “foreign capitalists,” while Toussenel simply identified them with the Jews). But we also find the same paradigm in other regions of Catholic Europe and during the Viennese revolution of March, when the associations of factory workers, porters, and dock workers, like the “Gesellschaft der Volks” and the “Demokratische Verein,” accused the liberal constitutionalists and the students of wanting the legal emancipation of the Jews with the sole aim of financing the introduction of the factory system. Also in the region of Mantua, under Habsburg rule, where rich Jews rented farms in the rice-producing zone and were entrepreneurs in the silk industry of Sabbioneta and Bozzolo, between 1842 and 1848 the peasants’ social conflict was marked by anti-Semitism. In 1848, the peasants blocked the appointment of Jewish officers in the National Guard and the election of Jews to the municipal assembly, and in 1880, at the height of the agricultural depression, even the socialist papers *L’Affarista alla Berlina* and *La Scintilla* once again attacked both the owners who were the peasants’ creditors and the renters, labeling them Jewish “usurers.” This again constitutes new evidence that the word “usury” had acquired an absolutely different meaning (from the traditional one) in the language of anti-Jewish anticapitalism.

In more general terms, in Central Europe, where legal emancipation came more slowly (1867 in the Habsburg Empire, 1869 in Prussia, etc.), there were recurring violent campaigns against “foreign finance,” above all in the second half of the 1870s, after the crash of the Vienna and Berlin stock exchanges, attributed to Jewish speculation. Karl Lueger, for instance, who had been elected bürgermeister of Vienna in 1895 but was confirmed in 1897, basically reproposed Toussenel’s old project: the nationalization of the eastern railway network (at that time on concession to the Rothschilds) and the expropriation of the wealth of the Jews. And the Catholic Church saw in organized social anti-Semitism the opportunity for giving a mass base to its own attack against secularized society. In 1895, Cardinal Serafino Vannutelli, who in 1880 had been the apostolic nuncio in Vienna, wrote that if “everything is in their hands (of the Jews): wealth, capital, banks, large factories, newspapers . . . , the parliament of the empire, this yoke can be removed” only by strong propaganda focusing “on the opposition of Jewish capitalism that harms the poor and small firms.” Journals such as *La Civiltà Cattolica*, the *Historisch-Politische Blätter*, and *La Croix* never stopped claiming the primacy of the church of Rome in the controversy against Jewish money and

This “socialism” could be described as Catholic not only because Drumont had returned to the church in 1880, after his meeting with Father Stanislas du Lac de Fugères, but rather because *La France juive* had many textual and subtextual echoes of Bonald, Villeneuve-Bargemont, and Gougenot des Mousseaux (and Toussenel, of course). Nevertheless, many of the varied and picturesque French socialist political families appreciated it precisely because anti-Semitism, in their view, could be a means of spreading anticapitalism in the sectors of society in which the working-class movement, between 1880 and 1890, was having serious difficulties in making inroads: according to that tragic misunderstanding, small shopkeepers, merchants, office workers, craftsmen, and savers would have become socialists by learning to hate the “rich Jewish usurers.” Despite criticizing its clerical spirit, Benoît Malon, Jules Guesde, and Auguste Chirac (the author of the famous *Les rois de la République*) always remained sincere admirers of Drumont.

Apart from being another path to follow in order to investigate the relationship between French anti-Semitic literature and The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, Drumont’s work constitutes—as has been seen—the final link between anti-Jewish anticapitalism and the fascist social anti-Semitism of the 1900s. This is confirmed by the case of Paolo Orano, in Italy, and that of the journalists of the French periodical *Je suis partout*, among whom stood out Orano’s wife, Camille Mallarmé: as late as 1938, the arguments of social anti-Semitic propaganda used to initiate the persecution were presented according to the rules of the traditionalist, Latin, and Catholic-nationalist rhetoric. This is the reason why I think that the young Hannah Arendt was right in writing that the arguments and words of the new social anti-Semitism were “feudal.”

The convergence of the arguments against emancipation of the anti-Semitic socialists with the much more consolidated approach of the neo-feudal, traditionalist and later nationalist Christian social propaganda cannot be interpreted as a purely rhetorical solution. The decision to use a rhetorical approach consolidated by Christian tradition against usury reveals the intention of making anti-Semitic propaganda more acceptable to the collective psychology of the popular classes, at least until the end of nineteenth century. It seems to me that the anti-Semitism of the socialist authors should be interpreted rather as the expression of an ambiguity present in the new
nineteenth-century working-class movement. The expression of anti-Jewish anticapitalism has to be placed and therefore explained in the context of a free-market society that did not succeed in functioning and was characterized until the mid-nineteenth century (but also later) by strong forces that were acting to restore the social institutions of the bodies and judiciary of the ancien régime, but that could at the same time well accept the military diplomatic order of the Holy Alliance and the national administrative state. Moreover, it should be borne in mind that the agricultural social classes, the aristocracy, and the church throughout the 1800s represented the persistence of the ancien régime and fought for the extirpation of all the laws and institutions produced by the advent of the new liberal constitutions and trade liberalization: the new laws of sovereignty and citizenship and the legal emancipation of religious minorities and the assimilation of the Jews were undoubtedly considered among the laws and institutions to be demolished.

Also the working-class associations were often opposed to the regulations and laws that only seemed to protect the inequalities produced by the free market. Before the middle and the working classes attempted a fragile social and political alliance (for example, to obtain greater or universal suffrage or the establishment of the republic as in the chartist movement in Great Britain or in the republican one in France), the crises resulting from the introduction of the free market and the industrial revolution often produced convergence between the land-owning class (and the aristocracy) and the craftsmen’s associations: one of the expressions of these convergences between the old agricultural class and the new working class was anti-Jewish anticapitalism.

But in the long history of the Great Transformation of Europe into a technological civilization and an industrial society based on the free market, class interests alone cannot offer a satisfactory explanation for anti-Jewish anticapitalism, a social and therefore long-lasting cultural phenomenon. Classes and social groups that participated in the general movement to safeguard the workers expelled from agriculture, the craftsmen ousted from their own workshops, the young men and the women confined to the factories, did not do it only because of their economic interests, and often, in fact, the measures to be obtained revealed that in only a few cases were the interests of a single social group at stake. Such measures, that is, did not respond to particular interests but to the need for safeguarding human work, health, the security of elderly workers: these were necessities that the free market was unable to tackle, such as issues like job security, the stabilization of territorial economies, and the
defense of cultural autonomies. But, up to the end of the century, the need for social protection, safeguards, and security could be presented not only by working-class associations but also by prominent people, the authorities of a region, or the churches, by religious confraternities, while, instead, the supporters of the liberal economy fought against the workers’ right to form associations in the name of the “freedom of work” and even denied the need to protect the whole of society from the consequences of the market.

The recurring threat of the collapse of the market economy, above all after the beginning of the 1843–1856 depression, strengthened the ideology of the return to some kind of ancien régime and also the need to establish some form of cooperative community: in this context, the birth of cultural syncretism was not surprising. And the anticapitalism of the craftsmen and the salaried workers and anti-Semitism so could get mixed up.

The case I have proposed in these pages is based on a hypothesis of generalization starting from the study of some texts. The concrete details I have identified in these texts and the analysis of their language, as well as their historical contexts, have provided a generalization that is based on the points of contact among those texts and the different contexts. I have proved the existence of historical relationships among authors, texts, and cultures, but, in some cases, I have established only morphological correspondences among texts and arguments far removed in time and space.

My approach could be considered reminiscent of Albert O. Hirschman’s brilliant text *The Rhetoric of Reaction: Perversity, Futility, Jeopardy* (1991), where Hirschman tried to respond immediately to the neoconservative triumphalism in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Latin America, through a deep analysis of the logic of the conservative discourse against civil citizenship, democracy, and the welfare state from the end of the eighteenth century. However, he did not deal with the rhetoric of anti-Semitism.110 This was done by Zeev Sternhell, in his classic study, *La droite révolutionnaire. Les origins françaises du fascisme. 1885–1914*, which he later developed in *Naissance de l’idéologie fasciste*.111 But Sternhell never investigated the deep roots of the cultural phenomenon of the new right-wing currents and he has not therefore traced social anti-Semitism back to the original event, the anti-universalist reaction of 1790–1808: in fact, he never cited Bonald’s text, nor has he investigated the birth, in those years, of social anti-Semitism as a reaction to the Enlightenment and emancipation. Sternhell’s chronological choices prevented him from understanding, in my view, the real genealogy
of what I define as anti-Jewish anticapitalist literature, just as they led him to misunderstand the very nature of the counter-Enlightenment in its relationship with fascism.  

On the other hand, Giovanni Miccoli is an expert in the study of anti-Semitism, but he has chosen to concentrate on the same historical period as Sternhell and on the problem of the anti-Semitic political controversy of the nascent Catholic parties and of the Roman Catholic press supported (but not always) by the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Miccoli’s thesis is that there is a genealogical relationship between the church’s millenarian anti-Judaic tradition and the new anti-Semitism of the Catholic political parties of the end of the nineteenth century, who saw the fight against Jewish power and hegemony over the modern world as a means of challenging the liberal European political order that arose after 1789 with the end of the relations between the monarchies of the ancien régime and the church. Thanks to the political use of this old religious tradition of accusations against the Jews, the church and Catholics became the main political actors in the struggle against “modern errors,” and, above all, drawing upon the historical memory of the anti-Jewish stereotypes, they succeeded in obtaining a wide popular consensus for anti-Semitic programs.  

I think instead that only a correct definition in time and space, of the historical genealogy of anti-Jewish anticapitalist propaganda against legal emancipation permits one to understand its real nature and the difference from the old anti-Judaism (and its theological, legal, and social connotations). Christian anti-Judaism was based, after the fourth century, on the dogmatic opposition to Talmudic Judaism and, after the Middle Ages, on legal discrimination. As has been well explained, the dogmatic-theological, legal, and social connotations of the anti-Judaic tradition make it an absolutely different phenomenon from the one that formed at the end of the eighteenth century. If the historian who investigates modern anti-Semitism loses sight of these crucially important differences, he could easily take seriously the pseudohistorical “excursus” in the speeches of Maurras, Hitler, and Paolo Orano, as real echoes of Meister Eckhart, Luther, or Bossuet. 

So, I agree with Delio Cantimori, who incisively observed that the Geistesgeschichte proposed in the texts of anti-Semitic propaganda cannot be taken seriously. And his best student, Adriano Prosperi, has noted that in the legal and theological literature, which was rife between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries throughout the period of the expulsions and the building of the ghettos, the issue of the natural difference (that is, of blood) between
Jews and Christians had widespread but ambiguous developments. It would therefore be a serious mistake to consider, for example, the question of the “puritas sanguinis” (which was laid down by the Spanish sixteenth-century statutes of “limpieza de sangre”) as the real genealogical source of the Nuremberg Laws.

On the part of the Iberian or Roman Inquisitors, the hunt for “relapsi” converts or apostate Christians confirms, on the contrary, that by the Catholic authorities as by Luther, the Jews were considered only the followers of a religion that had not recognized Jesus of Nazareth and who refused baptism; the Augustinian anti-Judaic tradition had therefore justified the historical persistence of this refusal as a providential testimony to the truth of the Old Testament against pagans and heretics: the Jews would convert to Christianity in the final phase of time and should not therefore be mistreated or killed but simply discriminated against and segregated in order to push them to enter the church. Nor had the new and radical Franciscan and Dominican anti-Judaism—also fueled by the controversy against loans and usury—brought into question these dogmatic approaches.

So the claim by Julius Streicher, the publisher of the Nazi newspaper Der Stürmer, of justifying himself by recalling Luther’s hatred toward the Jews, was groundless, even if German nationalist and anti-Semitic propaganda always tried to appropriate the figure of the great reformer.

In the context of Europe based on the Christian and therefore intrinsically anti-Judaic tradition, tolerance toward the Jews had included the conditions of separateness from, and discrimination against them but also their dependence upon the highest sovereign authorities, temporal and spiritual. So the communities of the Diaspora, until modern times, always inclined towards vertical alliances that, while they included discrimination (and the ban on owning land, having servants, or holding public office etc.) guaranteed them (in exchange for special taxes) a wide range of privileges in terms of autonomy. What Yerushalmi has defined as “the royal alliance” negotiated between Jewish “diplomats” and the Christian religious or secular authorities had, for centuries, been based on mutual interests.

Emancipation shattered all this, together with the idea of a separate Jewish body (or nation). Emancipation constituted an unprecedented opportunity, but it also produced traumatic grief and profound changes, such as the end of the autonomy of the communities and new Jewish identity crises over greater assimilation within the European cultures and nation-states, as well as the emergence of a full-blown anti-Semitism. This arose in the intellectual
circles of the intransigent and neo-feudal reaction to the *choc* at the revolutionary transformation of the nature of the public powers of the ancien régime, and it identified the European Jews with the new society based on the universalism of rights. During the nineteenth century, the bourgeoisie, the middle class, and many other social classes appropriated it, with the aim of diverting the social hatred of the defenders of the ancien régime against themselves. But the class-based opposition of the workers’ associations to the modern economy exploited anti-Jewish and anticapitalist rhetoric.

The reception of the anti-modern literary tradition made anti-Jewish anticapitalism endemic among intellectuals, aristocracy, particular social strata of salaried workers, craftsmen, and small traders, who tended to identify the Jews with free-market society.

Between 1790 and 1930, every class or social stratum that had found itself in conflict with the market society and with the state that had imposed its economic rules had been urged to accept the paradigm of anti-Jewish anticapitalism because the Jews were the only social group that seemed to have benefited from the market society and to represent the state that had imposed emancipation.119
WHAT WAS ANTI-JEWISH ANTICAPITALISM?

One of the most distinguished and anguished scholars of the last century, De- lio Cantimori, dedicated his life to the whole of the Reformation and heretics. He taught us the dangers of anachronism and of slipping into “metahistory,” as happened to the Harvard historian Peter Viereck.¹ I believe that the path I have followed through the pages of the varied literature of anti-Jewish propaganda, all sharing the same social stereotypes, is also a way of reconstructing on new bases the long history that led, without any teleological predestina- tion, to Auschwitz: in this case, the link between the past and the future seems to resemble the slow processes of hereditary biology, in which a new type of life can be the unforeseeable result of the combination of the elements of the long preceding history.² I do not believe, therefore, that it can be maintained that the Shoah was the consequence of “modernity” and that the notion of modernity cannot be used in such a generic and abstract way, alluding to “Enlightenment social engineering.”³ But it is also true that the emancipation legislation—the offspring of the Enlightenment—while demolishing the old dividing barriers between the circumcised and the baptized produced a new type of reaction to what was perceived as a new threat: a social, cultural reac- tion, namely.⁴

There are two ways of eliminating the Shoah from history: one is simply denying that it ever happened, as the reductionists and negationists do; the other is regarding it with reverence and terror as if it were something numi- nous beyond human reason. Therefore, there is a great deal at stake as regards historical truth: if we do not see the Shoah as something that belongs to our history and that has deep roots in the heart of Christian Europe, we condemn
ourselves to forgoing historical knowledge. It is certainly not by chance if, in recent times, the notion of reality has encountered serious difficulties with the reduction of history to a subjective narration or a novel. Whence has arisen the putting aside of a historical perspective, with the result that the sense of the future has become blurred and the present is experienced as “postmodern”—an age of survivors, disoriented among the ruins of what was the modern world?

Hence every serious attempt to tackle the genesis of anti-Semitism has to go through the task of placing it once again in real history: this task has developed in two stages. In the first, there were the accounts of the survivors, that “need to tell others” that Primo Levi felt as an “immediate and violent impulse.” The testimony of the survivors and the research commitment of historians such as Raul Hilberg, Saul Friedländer, and many others have erected such a mass of information as to render indefensible every form of negationism and every private attempt to escape from the burden that weighs on the conscience of humanity. The second stage is the investigation of the deep roots of the Shoah in European history and culture, a task that still lies ahead.

I believe that this book could be a step in that direction because the reconstruction of the links between the anti-Judaic tradition of Christian Europe and modern anti-Jewish anticapitalism has to be tied to a vigorous defense of the principle of reality as the foundation of historical knowledge.

What August Bebel, in 1893, stigmatized as the “socialism of the imbecile” was the mask, taken up by anti-Semitism as anticapitalism, an ideology that, after having for a long time fueled the intellectual and political scene with the myth of the Jewish-Protestant-Masonic plot, was often accepted in the popular and proletarian base of the socialist parties, subsequently channeling itself in Hitler’s “national socialism” and in the nationalist and corporatist ideology of fascism. Along this course, the river had swelled and into it had flowed the millenarian tradition of Christian polemic against usury and of Christian anti-Judaism spread by the Catholic Church at war with religious, moral, and economic individualism, the offspring of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution.

The advent of the market and economic individualism was interpreted as a result of the emancipation of the Jews: the social uncertainty created by the tumultuous change in society sparked a need for roots and protective corporations and, in this situation, the old Christian polemic against usury could be reproposed as an attack against the Jew as the devastating force of finance, guilty of social disintegration and poverty. Thus, the plot to eliminate the Jews
took shape: a real plot masked and announced with the fabrication of a false plot, that of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, which had to mark the stages of the approach of genocide. And if the first soil of incubation of the myth of the Jewish and Masonic plot had been post-Revolutionary France, we have subsequently found it again in many Protestant or Catholic states in which there had been the advance of the constitutional state and liberal governments: in Italy, for instance, the “sacrilegious” attack against papal Rome unleashed the attack of the Jesuits of *La Civiltà Cattolica* against the Jewish-Masonic “anti-Christian war.” These threads also converged in anti-Jewish anticapitalism, which we find especially in Italy and summarized in the political and intellectual paths of Paolo Orano and Mussolini: so the new alliance between fascism and the church happened in the light of the transformation of the Jewish Jesus into a Roman Christ, and the propaganda of the regime and the church created those feelings of hostility and indifference in which the 1938 racial laws emerged.

But in recognizing the Holocaust’s deep cultural and social roots, we have to take into account the causes that brought to the surface, in our time and especially in Europe, anti-Semitic temptations spreading in political and religious parlance. The enemy has not stopped winning—as Walter Benjamin has written—and while he continues to win not even the dead will be safe. It is because of this that I believe that it appears urgent to defend, through the study of history, the principle of reality. Against the strategy of disinformation and propaganda that led to Auschwitz, it is only history that reaffirms, through the facts, that principle of reality that can reconcile us with the idea of truth.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, European Jews such as Bernard Lazare and Raffaele Ottolenghi replied to Drumont and Paolo Orano by trying to take their arguments seriously in order to dismantle their theses piece by piece and demonstrate their falsehood. Vidal Naquet did the same, with regard to the negationists of the Shoah, tracing their works back to a falsification typical of our times: the current cultural tendency to consider as nonexistent authentic and consolidated realities. He has also revealed the method of falsifying the facts.

The nineteenth-century propagandists ably mixed facts with false stereotypes in a purely ideological approach. The authors or author of the *Protocols* followed, instead, the typical procedures of the “art of falsification,” using texts, or parts of true texts taken from the works of others, to include them in a text fabricated *ex novo* and totally false, with the aim of pursuing a political
objective, which was attained with complete success. For many decades the false text was taken to be true.

The history of anti-Jewish propaganda and the history of the falsification also have a meaning of their own, whose logic has been enlightened by the memories of the deportees and the historical studies of the persecution. From the intense nineteenth-century campaigns to the Dreyfus affair, from the racial legislation to the deportations, that logic shows itself to be that of progressive radicalization based on the falsification of the facts.⁶

But reduction, falsification, and denial of established and proven facts are procedures that belong also to the approach of the negationists and falsifiers of the Hitlerian massacre, and in their approach, there still persists an aspect of the nineteenth-century anti-Jewish rhetoric. Negationist rhetoric has inherited, for example, from anti-Semitic Nazi “socialism” a false criticism of social relations, the mania of explaining everything, and an all-absorbing theoretical ambition. According to the negationists, all the twentieth-century systems are variants of the capitalist domination, and the Nazi concentration-camp system is not considered an abyss that separated the Third Reich from other systems but only a form of imperialist domination, qualitatively no different from the logic of any capitalist domination: the extreme exploitation of the labor force.

As I wrote, Hannah Arendt has traced the birth of the modern anti-Jewish hatred back to the aristocratic and clerical reaction against legal emancipation and the new bourgeoisie, an advocate of the emancipation and new citizenship, and hence to the clergy’s political plan to deflect the aristocratic reaction on to the Jews.⁷ I suppose now that the negationists have provided a caricature of Arendt’s interpretation, stating that the German lower middle class, condemned by the inexorable progress of the concentration of capital, unloaded the social pressure on to the Jews: in the end, the camps were only a system of rational and industrial exploitation, as well as of elimination of the useless labor force. The Shoah is thus reduced in negationist rhetoric to a dependent variable of the exploitation, scaled down to ridiculous numbers because considered impossible on the scale of a real, industrially organized genocide.⁸ Therefore, the genocide could not have happened and the gas chambers never existed: the Nazis simply decided upon the forced emigration of the Jews to occupied Eastern Europe and the victims were “only” a few tens of thousands, caused by the inevitable sufferings of the deportation (they were therefore far fewer than the number of victims of the terror against the peasants unleashed by Stalin and the Soviet Union).
And even the old thesis of the Jewish plot has been reused in order to explain the responsibility for the outbreak of the World War II. Jewish accounts are considered lies; the sources and the documents before the liberation of Auschwitz are considered unreliable; the firsthand diaries and documents regarding Nazi methods are regularly filed as false; finally, the extermination is considered impossible for “technical” reasons. The corollary is evident: the negationist lie reveals the intention of damaging, or rather denying, the validity of all the evidence accumulated since the Nuremberg Trials and overturning those verdicts.

The problem naturally directly concerns the “evidence” of the extermination of the Jews, today disputed by the negationists. We all know that the genocide of the Jews did not capture the attention of the legal and historical worlds at Nuremberg, but only at Jerusalem, in 1961, when the Eichmann trial was being held. It stimulated the publication of eye-witness accounts, documents, and historical studies and encouraged everyone, both outside and within Israel, to reflect on the persecution, the extermination, and their own decisions with regard to both. This trial brought out a new awareness of the significance of the catastrophe and indelibly marked the culture of the second half of the twentieth century. The merit must go to the study by Hannah Arendt published in 1963: *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*. 9

The book triggered heated disputes among the “reporters” who were present, ranging from the historian Hugh Trevor-Roper to Telford Taylor, the main prosecutor at Nuremberg, from Martha Gellhorn to Elie Wiesel, and also provoked an exchange of ferocious accusations between the Jewish authorities of Israel and the author, of which there is an echo in the correspondence between Arendt and Gershom Scholem. 10 Above all, it gave rise to the controversy about the relationship between anti-Semitism and the Holocaust, as well as the Jewish question after the Holocaust. 11

But the interpretative key of the “banality” of the protagonist of the Holocaust was in no way an invention of Arendt. Moshe Pearlman stigmatized Eichmann as “Mister Average Man,” and Martha Gellhorn explained his demeanor at the trial as the result of the dried-up mind of “an organization man who carried out the work he had chosen.” But Arendt had the merit of offering a systematic interpretation of that ordinariness, perfectly consistent with her own interpretation of totalitarianism. 12

David Cesarani, Eichmann’s biographer, maintains in a recent study that “the attitude of the accused” was part of a deliberate defensive strategy to avoid
any manifestation of his criminal tendency, as well as to counter the intention of the Israeli authorities, especially David Ben-Gurion, and of the chief Israeli appeal court prosecutor, Gideon Hausner, who wanted to maintain the thesis that Eichmann had acted as a “satanic personality . . . up to his neck in an abyss of abomination.” Nevertheless, Arendt stated that Eichmann had been an administrator in the bureaucracy of the extermination and simply a cog in the machine who had acted without an ideological motivation or hatred toward the Jews. He had only obeyed an automatic mechanism governed by regulations and practices that embodied the inhumanity of the Nazi project. Eichmann would have been a man like so many others, neither depraved nor sadistic, but terribly normal.

Arendt’s thesis was confirmed by the monumental research of Franz Neu- mann’s most important student, Raul Hilberg, whose study of the destruction of the European Jews emphasizes the progressive autonomy of the bureaucracy of the extermination from the state, from the party, and from the other Nazi organizations. David Cesarani, nevertheless, insists that Arendt forced her sources to adapt them to her own theories about totalitarianism and to make Eichmann the epitome of the totalitarian man: for Cesarani, on the contrary, the key to understanding Eichmann is in the ideas that “possessed the man,” the society in which such ideas circulated freely, and, finally, the political system that adopted them as a creed and implemented them during the war.

What is now important for me is that the diverse theses of Arendt and Cesarani coincide, nevertheless, on a crucial point: the genocide was made possible by the interiorization, by the persecutors, of the persecutory paradigm, and then by a system of persecution based on wanting to demonstrate the “inhumanity” of the Jews. Thanks to both these premises, the bureaucrat of anti-Semitism “became a common element” in a society in which “men equipped with modern technologies and hidden in the recesses of the bureaucratic structures, but at a safe distance from their targets, can unleash terrible devastation on humanity.”

And what is even more important is that both Cesarani and Hannah Arendt obstinately defended the principle of the burden of proof and evidence with regard to Eichmann’s individual responsibilities. Their conviction that Eichmann constituted the model of the totalitarian official went in exactly the opposite direction of the judges’ legal strategies, but also against those who aimed at mixing up, without eliminating them, individual respon-
sibilities with the collective guilt: “Guilt and innocence before the law are two objective entities, and even if eighty million Germans had behaved like Eichmann, he could not have been excused because of this.”

Until the sixteenth century it was not infrequent for a Jewish synagogue to be represented as a blindfolded woman. The blindfold alluded to the blindness that clouded the minds of the Jews, obdurate in their unbelief, and that symbol was often contrasted with the image of the Christian church, as a woman whose glance was free and illuminated by the grace of God. After 1493, the image of the blindfolded woman was replaced by the humanistic and Christian symbol of an impartial and public justice. Eichmann would never have imagined that precisely the Jewish synagogue would have embodied, against him, the image of blindfolded justice. And _Un Eichmann de papier_ is the title of Pierre Vidal-Naquet’s finest study, about the relationship between Eichmann’s anti-Semitism and that of the negationists.

The text initiated a long battle against authors motivated by the desire to destroy an awareness of the truth of the extermination of the European Jews and of the difference between a fascist camp and any other concentration camp: the negationists, who used the distortion of eye-witness accounts and documents and made an inaccurate and faulty historical comparison (Hitler’s concentration camps were, for example, likened to the American camps organized by the Roosevelt administration for the internment of citizens of Japanese extraction). The negationists also relativized those slaughters that they could not deny, in the context of the massacres of the civilian populations in all the theaters of war, and they insinuated that the project for the “final solution” had only been a plan of expelling the Jews to the East. The negationists declared the nonexistence of reality.

If the anti-Semites who were convinced of the guilt of Alfred Dreyfus had had to eliminate confirmed evidence and proof, the deniers of the Shoah maintained the nonexistence of the reality of the extermination, with groundless arguments that, in themselves, did not deserve to be discussed. But the attack against historiography, nevertheless, cannot be underestimated.

By declaring false all the evidence of the facts that deny the aprioristic thesis they want to maintain, the reductionists and negationists propose yet again the problem of falsification: the negationists produce falsehood in the form of the affirmation of what never happened or in the declaration of the unreality of what actually happened. At the same, it is not surprising if the negationists’ interpretations seem and are completely inconsistent because any
interpretation, as far as they are concerned, is only good if it serves to demonstrate that the “lie of Auschwitz” was the last plot of the Jews who, through it, control public opinion.

The scientific duty of confirming with verified evidence that the indications concerning the past are authentic holds true for the historian because proof is the rational nucleus of historical interpretation, as it is for the judge’s verdict. The negationist, instead, overturns the burden and duty of providing proof: it is up to the “Jewish liars” to demonstrate that the Shoah really happened. So, the thesis “of the nonexistence of Auschwitz” implies the denial not only of that truth but also of the possibility of arriving at any historical truth about the past. The persecution and the extermination of the Jews cannot be explained only as the final development of the deportation, in the context of the war on the eastern front because that would risk dissolving the links between the genocide and the long history of anti-Jewish prejudice and hatred.

THE LANGUAGES OF MEMORY

The persecution of European Jews, invoked since the time of the legal emancipation and justified by propaganda based on false documents, was not limited to the denial of rights; it wrecked lives. But this catastrophe would not have been possible without the defeat of logic, which, as Victor Klemperer tried to demonstrate, would not have been possible without also disfiguring language: “Nazism, in its aspiration to attain totality, technicalizes and organizes everything,” since the regime aims at “depriving each person of his individuality and anaesthetizing his personality, to make him one of the herd without thought or will . . . to make him an atom of a rotating mass.” The new language is the weapon of tyranny and no longer the mother tongue spoken before the catastrophe, even if its words and terms could seem the same. As Arendt wrote: “It is not the German language which has gone mad . . . trying to survive therefore means, above all, preserving it” from Nazi corruption, to make it the core of memory.

The challenge became terrible for Paul Antschel. Born in Czernowitz in 1920, in Bucovina, which had been annexed to Romania after the end of the Great War, he was educated in Yiddish and German: the Jew Antschel chose “to come to terms” with Auschwitz by composing verses about the Shoah in his own mother tongue, the same of his assassinated mother (we know him as the poet Paul Celan, an anagram of Ancel). “Todesfuge” is his most famous poem. Begun in 1945, in Czernowitz, it was completed in Bucharest, in the
period between the deportation and assassination of his parents in the camp of Michajlovka, in Ukraine, and the massacre of the Jews of Bucovina. “Der Tod ist ein Meister aus Deutschland”—death is a master from Germany in Celan’s “death fugue,” as in the musical tradition of Schubert, Wagner, and Mahler. And “der Tod” was accompanied by the small Jewish orchestras of the concentration camps.\textsuperscript{24}

Theodor Adorno maintained the impossibility of composing poetry after Auschwitz, but Celan opposed this and created “Todesfuge” that poem of lament in the infinite silence. So Celan refused for years any invitation to meet Adorno. Instead, he met Heidegger, because he was deeply influenced by Heidegger’s reflection (so much that he described his own research on language as “the Heidegger phase”).\textsuperscript{25} But he was also convinced that Heidegger’s “philosophy of war,” that “existing in order to die” resolved in the mass call to arms and collective mobilization, was in any case antithetical to his idea of cultural reparation for the destiny of the victims.

Primo Levi also criticized Adorno’s contradiction because Adorno had condemned poetry through the written word, but Levi also retorted that the only possible poetry about Auschwitz was precisely that of Celan.\textsuperscript{26}

For me, as for Hannah Arendt, the destruction of European Jews is indissolubly linked with the whole of European history. Only by recognizing that the European Jews were selected as the object of a ferocious project of the purging of humanity could the extermination be defined as a crime against the whole of humanity: only in this way would the terrifying experience of the Jews, inasmuch as they were Jews, have become the catastrophe of the whole of humanity. It was in fact not by chance that the Jews had been the first victims of the factories of death: their tragically exceptional destiny had to shed light on the history of all peoples.

Understanding that the extermination of six million European Jews was really a crime against the whole of humanity, even if perpetrated against the body of the Jewish people, we can understand how the choice of those victims had been the ultimate effect of a long European and Christian tradition of hatred.\textsuperscript{27} The centuries-old Christian anti-Jewish tradition had prepared the ground for propaganda, falsification, and persecution, and the false conspiracy had produced a real persecution. In the light of such an outcome, the problem of the relationship between the anti-Jewish tradition and the persecution may be reconsidered only in the context of the history of the European cultures. The concoction of the false Protocols was the result of this propaganda, which aimed at dehumanizing the Jews and in which the enemy had
been represented as a “nonperson” long before the concentration camp really reduced him to such a condition.  

The first written accounts of the Shoah appeared soon after the war, while in Vienna, in 1948, Paul Celan was publishing “Todesfuge” and in Paris, in 1947, Robert Antelme published *L’espèce humaine*. Many publishers, however, were discouraging authors, and the Shoah was subject to oblivion, if not censorship, until the Eichmann trial which reactivated the imperative of remembering. So it began what Annette Wieviorka called “the era of the witness.” And in the following years the research of sources and documents and “the age of paper” provided undeniable evidence.

It was for this reason that Primo Levi always favored a materialistic, “cold” analysis of the Shoah and described its mechanisms as a slow and gradual accumulation of procedures, regulations, and practices aiming at the progressive elimination of the identity of the victims and the annulment of their human nature. The enormous massacre was not “an exclusively Jewish prerogative,” but, nevertheless, the obliteration of the victim’s humanity, and the destruction of his “person,” proved to be a “tragic, uniquely Jewish privilege.” The case of a child detained in Auschwitz, Hurbinek—whom Levi defined as the “child of death”—is exemplary: Hurbinek was a “nothing,” devoid of speech, “which no one had bothered to teach him” and Hurbinek—concluded Levi—could only have been a Jewish child.

For years after World War II, the Shoah was an unbearable event for European culture: it was also trivialized or reduced by remembrance to a succession of horrors, with the consequence, therefore, that the imperative to remember could give rise to unforeseen risks.

But Primo Levi understood this early on and, therefore, decided to recount those characteristics of the Nazi massacre that define it as a general catastrophe for the whole of humanity and, at the same time, a “unique” phenomenon: in other words, the mass deportations, the aim of genocide, the reintroduction of a slave economy, the obliteration of a person’s human dimension. He opposed a memory in which persecution and the Shoah would be incorporated and mixed up in an indistinct amalgam and succeeded in countering the postwar repression of memory. And he contextualized the Shoah in the long cultural history of Europe.

At the end of the 1940s, European society, traumatized by the war, had an extreme need to reconstruct a shared memory, in order to avoid any further conflict, dangerous for social and moral cohesion. Thus, in the period immediately after the Holocaust, the Shoah underwent an oblivion that can only in part be explained by the enormity of the tragedy.
When in the 1960s and 1970s, the gathering of eye-witness accounts and the development of a specialized historiography slowly began to fill the memory gap, there was, at times, the risk of an opposite reaction: the Shoah could become an exceptional phenomenon (above all, in the interpretations that aimed at reducing it to Hitler’s intention), and this “intention” did not even lack interpretations of the theological kind. 36

Mainly in the years following the Lebanon war, many events contributed to changing the “image of the Jews” from what it was after the World War II: the decades-old conflict between the state of Israel and the Palestinian Arabs resulted in the victims of the Shoah being considered responsible for the massacre of another people, of a new “genocide.” This comparison—not to mention the equivalence—is, of course, ignoble, but we have to understand that it is a widespread perception. Thus, if not since 1967, at least since 1982—the year of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon—the memory of the Shoah has encountered ever greater difficulties. The victim, in the anthropology of sacrifice, must always convey an image of innocence. 37

Even if the state of Israel is not innocent, the European, American, and Israeli Jews must defend themselves because the Diaspora is coupled with, or rather imposed on, the Jewish state: for decades, the Israeli-Palestinian issue has provoked much more than a legitimate criticism of Israeli government policies; it has provoked the delegitimization of Israel as a state. Moreover, the identification of ever broader sectors of the Diaspora with Israel has triggered a new anti-Semitism, which cannot be traced back to the anti-Jewish Christian tradition or to racial anti-Semitism. The Diaspora Jews are now depicted as the emissaries, the accomplices, the representatives of the state of Israel, which would constitute a military and intelligence outpost of the “American Empire.” In the “antiglobal” attitude, which has taken the place of the old anticapitalism, there are often ideological residues of European anti-Jewish anticapitalism, unearthed above all in Central and Eastern Europe or reemerging in the language of Islamist extremist groups. 38

The consequences of this new populism have been disastrous: in the realm of memory, the sufferings of the Palestinians—also a European legacy, and in particular of the British Mandate in Palestine after World War I—have been inflated to make them equivalent to the Shoah, and the latter has been “downgraded” to make it comparable with the Israeli repression of the Palestinian Arabs. 39

Aberrations and distortions of memory cannot easily be countered since, often, turning to the facts and the evidence is not sufficient. Deconstructions and decontextualizations are the result of a political and cultural conflict
about questions of identity, against which the weapon of criticism can do little. So the propaganda based on the alleged denunciation of “globalization” in fact reduces the memory of the Shoah to an invention of the state of Israel and to the blackmail of the descendants of the survivors. The former Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad could thus attribute the “falsehood of the Shoah” to the old Jewish plan to “control the world,” and, in doing so, he is drawing, knowingly or otherwise, from the old “self-pitying” paradigm of the forgers of the Protocols.  

This collapse has to be seen in the context of the great European upheaval that began in 1989. Since then, Europe has lost any residual cultural centrality. European integration, for example, is necessary to counteract the economic regression of Europe, but it poses—with the progressive enlargements of the union—the problem of reconciling the national states with the new continental political dimension. An unexpected return of the presumed ethnic, local, regional, and national identities has brought to light, once again, the issue of minorities. In the context of the new national rivalries and hostilities, Europe, which has seen half of its “most European and least nationalist” citizens, the Jews, exterminated, has to face new populism and the rise of a new social anti-Semitism. Again, the problem of remembering the causes of this tragedy and demonstrating that Europe is coming to terms with its own past can only come about through the preservation of the memory of its Jews, but the nature of the relationship among the public memory of World War II, the history of the anti-Nazi resistance, and the memory of the anti-Jewish persecution has changed.

In the history of the Italian republic, for example, the 1990s were a watershed: the collapse of the political system of the Italian parties and of the republican political cultures forced us to reconsider the history of the Italian Jews in a much longer time span (from the age of the Risorgimento emancipation to the events of fascist and postfascist Italy) and in a new perspective.

We are, by now, able to discard the conventional thesis of the “patriotism” of the Jewish minority and to state that its participation in the national cause and in the Risorgimento wars, then its integration in liberal Italy, did not follow uniform paths: and this was not only due to geohistorical factors in the different regions of the country. It should particularly be borne in mind that the integration in the new unitary state was not exempt from rejection on the part of local elites and the Catholic Church and that there were also crises within the Jewish communities themselves. The Risorgimento canon, based on the romantic idea of the nation and, therefore, on the concepts of honor
and blood ties, was definitively marred in the crisis of the end of the nineteenth century (perhaps as early as 1870) and was subsequently incorporated in the rhetoric of the fascist regime. This resulted in the collapse of the traditional representation of the fatherland. In conclusion, between 1943 and 1945 the Italian persecution—in willing collaboration with the Nazis—of their Jewish compatriots, shattered the Risorgimento illusions about emancipation, bringing to light the antiliberal cultures and their anti-Jewish stereotypes.

The complex sequence of institutional and cultural paths that led Italian Jewry to integrate in state institutions and to express its approval of the regime should be reevaluated in less positive terms, even if, on the other hand, one should not underestimate the significance of the most committed antifascist conspiracies, in Florence in 1922 through 1924 and Turin in 1934 and 1935, in which, above all, Jewish students, Jewish intellectuals, and Jewish professionals played leading roles. Here, however, it is necessary to point out that neither the participation of young Jews in antifascism nor the confluence of the various forms of Italian anti-Semitism in the persecution perpetrated by the regime induced Italian Jews to give up the consoling and deceptive cultural representation arrived at through the Risorgimento and emancipation. “Rediscovering an identity” after the Shoah constituted for Italian Jews the uncertain destination of a difficult path, marked not only by the memory of the unexpected persecution and the trauma of the Shoah but also by the new reality of the birth of the state of Israel in 1948.

After 1948, almost like an automatic reaction, Jews developed a self-exonerating interpretation of what had happened to the Jewish communities under fascism; and from this approach there originated an interpretation accepted by the Jews and many Italian antifascists: Fascist anti-Semitism had been a “parenthesis.” This implicit, background conflict between Jewish recollection and national public memory was not an exclusively Italian characteristic, at least in the two decades after the war: it was assuaged or repressed by a harmonious representation according to which Italian Jews participated in the self-exonerating drive that involved the vast majority of Italians, political parties, and national institutions and a large section of the national culture. The responsibility for the depriving of rights, persecution and the loss of lives of the Jews was consequently exclusively attributed to the Nazis, thereby avoiding any investigation of the responsibility of the Italian regime and of the whole Italian people, too.

Auschwitz has become the paradigm of the persecution, but this often excludes the history of the deep roots of anti-Semitism in European cultures:
without taking into account the roots and identity of European (and Italian) Jews, there was an attempt to consider all the persecuted as belonging to a single category, without explaining the dynamics of their persecution and its connection with the anti-Jewish Christian tradition and its legacies.\textsuperscript{46} From 1945, there was a new self-representation that helped to integrate the Shoah in the postfascist public memory, but only much later, the memory of the trauma became the only discernible sign of the Jewish identity. In the face of a historic crisis of Judaism and the loss of significant common values, what remained transformed itself into “a kind of abstract awareness of being Jewish.” Moreover, by then, the Jews were unable to live in contact with the living sources of tradition, which was forced to use the memory of the persecution in order to react against its crisis of emptiness.\textsuperscript{47} In fact, it would not be too far from the truth to state that, for example, there developed—between the recollection of European Jews and the national memories—deep links, albeit elusory, starting from the common and unsuccessful attempt to reestablish themselves on the foundations of the wounds of the war and the repression of the most painful issues. At the beginning both resorted to the alibi of the recent past to forget the more remote legacy, and the inevitable results of these selective memories were self-exoneration and a parenthetic interpretation of anti-Semitism.\textsuperscript{48}

Claudio Pavone has written that the Italian resistance was also “an attempt to come to terms with the past,”\textsuperscript{49} but the history of the relationship between the “patriotic-resistance” memory and the Jewish memory demolishes the most widespread account of the chronological history of the resistance. The latter account would have us include in a single glance the transition from the regime’s crisis, in July 1943, to the signing of the peace treaty in 1949: from this perspective, one must also reconsider the ways in which society and the national institutions have reworked the national public memory and that of Italian Jews, and thus arrive at a different evaluation of political acts, commemorative styles, and interpretative paradigms.

The moment to which we should return is the fall of the regime, the work of a fraction of the leading group of fascism, and the beginning of a catastrophic crisis for the unitary state. Many years ago, the writer Salvatore Satta insisted that “No one, who has not lived through the terrible experience of the war, can imagine the increasingly frantic way, with the passing of the days and years, in which the Italians wanted defeat” and the “confusion generated by that conflicting feeling.”\textsuperscript{50} Satta’s words gave the lie to the political statement with which the first antifascist government, headed by Bonomi,
the government of the Kingdom of the South co-belligerent with the Allies against Germany, had intended to attribute the responsibility for the war of aggression solely to the leading group of the regime. (On the other hand, a part of that group had brought about Mussolini’s arrest on July 25, 1943.) The political statement of Bonomi’s government resorted to the self-exonerating lie that “the vast majority of the country, as early as 1940, had been opposed to the fascist domination.”

This is precisely the point: what was the real foundation of the civil and moral religion of antifascism, and therefore also of its role in the national memory and in that of Italian Jews? In discussing this problem, it can be helpful to compare the sources of the Jewish memory with the documents of the patriotic and resistance memory. In this regard, Piero Calamandrei’s *Diario* is an extraordinary source that fully restores the link between the new political morality and the Christian faith that, under the impact of the tragedy, Calamandrei shared with some of the outstanding Italian intellectuals of the time: the philosopher Benedetto Croce, the critic Luigi Russo, and the writer Piero Pancrazi. Absolutely essential, in order to reconstitute the country’s memory and conscience, was—according to them—the building of a new faith shared by the nation, therefore of a new “creed” and of a “religion of anti-Fascism” (which, however, everyone understood differently).

From 1944, Calamandrei was the high priest of this new secular religion. Adept at a rhetoric totally based on the Risorgimento precept, he always hoped for the “necessity of a heroic Christianity, with martyrs and suffering,” which would have satisfied the widespread demand for meaning and dramaturgy.

But that new Christianity (antifascism) missed the opportunity: in fact, the various plans to build the new civil religion, with its rituals, mythographies, and monuments failed to materialize. The same fate befell the aim of establishing a “hegemony” of the new political culture, based on the shared memory of an afflicted country. It was a cultural and political defeat also certainly provoked by the crisis of the coalitions and governments of national unity, and then by the restoration established by the Cold War. Thus, every party, every religious denomination, and, at times, every local or regional community developed and cultivated different memories. Many decades later, the collapse of the political system and of the republican parties reawakened in the old and new antirepublican parties of the Right (also obviously opposed to antifascism) the long-awaited possibility of canceling the whole republican political era and the antifascist legacy; this would, of course, also have applied to antifascism, the intolerable Resistance, participatory democracy, and,
finally, the workers’ dream of becoming the ruling class. From the mid-1990s, the new and old right-wing parties took up once again, in tune with the arguments of the defeated fascists in 1945, the need for a new national memory, based on forgetting the antifascist opposition. The new Right tried to take advantage of the fragility of the old antifascist memories and of the omissions of the Jewish one.

But the “sins of memory” certainly did not begin at the end of the twentieth century. As early as 1946, the mechanisms of purging justice, the missing trial against those in command of the German occupation system, and avoiding the prosecution of Italian war criminals had contributed to stabilizing the Italian political set-up: these events also stabilized the frameworks of national memory, which was partial and selective, morally, politically, and geographically. Undoubtedly, herein lie the roots of the fragility of republican antifascism after the end of the resistance.\textsuperscript{53} Similar conclusions could also be provided for many other European countries, where the past became another country, as Toni Judt wrote. Nevertheless, in Italy, the cultural defeat had deep roots.

Other documents and sources can help us to understand it better. In the Archivio dell’Istituto Nazionale per la Storia del Movimento di Liberazione in Italia and its Pietro Malvezzi Collection, the letters of members of the resistance condemned to death are illuminating. These letters often contain the codified formulae of the acceptance of death as a “Christian duty.” Regardless of social class or political affiliation of the partisans who were about to die, the forms of farewell to relatives, in these letters, are in harmony with those of the soldiers of World War I and, even further back in time, with the imagery of the Risorgimento martyrs. One of the best known sources, in this context, is the \textit{Confortatorio di Mantova}, dedicated, in 1868, by Mons. Luigi Martini, to the “martyrs” of Belfiore, whose texts demonstrate the conspirators’ willing adhesion to the creed and Mazzinian catechism but also to the Catholic tradition: hence, those wills conform to the canon of the devout precept of the relationship between those who are about to die and those destined to gather their words.

I have dealt with this subject in greater detail elsewhere, and I will here confine myself only to highlighting, in those documents, the striking religious dimension of the resistance fighters’ moral choice.\textsuperscript{54} While it was certainly not irreconcilable with a communist or socialist (not to mention Christian Democrat) political faith, it reveals, albeit with the benefit of hindsight, a glar-
ing contrast with the postwar antifascist civil religion proposed between 1945 and 1947, at the time of the governments of national unity. The weak powers and institutions that tried to direct the transition from fascism to democracy were not capable of providing an overall framework for the commemorations and the cult of the dead, or of reconnecting republican political language with the prefascist democratic fascism to postfascism: the monarchy, the CLN (the Committee for National Liberation), the army, the parties, the bureaucracy and the Catholic Church clashed. However, one has to consider whether these fundamental political causes were solely responsible for the polysemy of the different forms of parlance, the fragility of the new political community that had emerged from the trauma of the war, and the inconsistent policies toward the war veterans and the Partisans, or whether, instead, such a phenomenon did not reveal the permanence of deeply rooted traditions, to which the different memories of the relatives of the victims of civilian massacres, the religious communities, and the survivors of Allied bombing raids could be linked.55 Perhaps I'm insisting too much on the mirrorlike fragility of the memories of the non-Jewish Italians and of the Italian Jews. I am doing it in order to react, as a non-Jew, to the extreme solitude in which the memory of the Shoah is faced in Italy and Europe. I do this, aware that the structural symmetries between the memories do not make the present cultural and political isolation of the Jewish memory in any way less serious, a reflection of a widespread prejudice among non-Jews.56 Progressively, Auschwitz has become the only “cradle of the new Jewish consciousness of the new Jewish nation,”57 and the dichotomy between memories of the war and the Jewish memory has become one of the many difficulties of our modern cultural condition. In the meantime, the rebirth of the logic of identities and the search for an impossible shared memory of the heirs of fascism and its victims feed on the commonplace of the “duty to remember.”58

But a more important and further difficulty seems to be the deep contradiction between memory and history. On this issue, a clash between dramatic alternatives, regarding the relationship between memory and historiography, has placed the historians Martin Broszat and Saul Friedländer on opposite sides. The former considered the persistence of a “mournful” memory as the main obstacle to the historicization; the latter, on the contrary, feared the possible reduction of historiographic rationalization to normalization, hence the concern that the ritualization of mourning could exhaust the compassion and sympathy, which also represent important resources for historical research.59
The study of the persecution of the Jews should not be based solely on erudition, and it does not only depend upon limpid rationality. On the contrary, it thrives on that “rage of memory.”

It is not true—wrote Friedländer—that passion and memory hinder historiographic investigation nor, even less so, that they clash with enlightened aspirations for change. Although these are dimensions that, with difficulty, can escape the impact of the cultural industry and the television democracy, which today govern all the cultural processes, they are indispensable for research. And Vidal-Naquet observed that if historiography is unable to explain the transformations of memory it falls to a wretched level. This means that historiography must take up the challenge posed by memory but not permit it to become frozen in a normalized or monumental history, crystallizing the passion that is at the origin of research.

I would like to explain myself with the example of the Jewish Museum in Berlin, planned by Daniel Libeskind, which splendidly represents the overcoming of the dichotomy between memory and history: here the continuity of Jewish German history stops where that line is broken by the discontinuity of the persecution, symbolized by the abyss of the Shoah. And the same requirement, it seems to me, is expressed when Roberto della Rocca warns historiography not to dissipate the “salt of memory.”

THE SHOAH, INSIDE AND OUTSIDE HISTORY

Regarding the Shoah—in Hebrew: extermination or obliteration—today we know almost everything: the industrial organization, technologies, political dimension, and bureaucratic administration and even its strategic irrationality with respect to the Nazis’ own objective of winning the war. We know a great deal about the victims: the terrible ordeal of the men, from forced labor to execution, the fate of the women, the abyss that immediately swallowed up the old, the sick, the children. Dalia Hofer, Lenore Weitzman, and Anna Bravo have taught us that the way to annihilation was also marked by gender differences and events that specifically struck men inasmuch as they were men and women inasmuch as they were women.

And Raul Hilberg’s fundamental contribution to our knowledge of the bureaucratic, administrative, and technical machinery of the Shoah was followed by those of Philippe Burrin, Christopher Browning, and Martin Broszat, who, in more recent years, have made decisive discoveries. In 1992, the minutes of the Berlin Conference of Wansee, organized on January 20, 1942,
by Reinhard Heydrich, the head of the Reich's Security Headquarters and of
the Sipo-Gestapo, on behalf of Göring and Himmler (and drawn up by the
head of the “Emigration and Evacuation” section of that headquarters, Adolf
Eichmann) were published by Kurt Pätzold and Erika Schwarz. These Eich-
mann’s minutes, and the text of the authorization (dated July 31, 1941, signed
by Göring and addressed to Heydrich), in order to prepare a “global solution
to the Jewish question,” provide definitive proof that the Security Headquar-
ters had set the political objectives of, first, reserving exclusively for itself the
liquidation of German Jews and those of occupied Europe; second, coordi-
nating all the institutions of the Third Reich involved in the “global solution”;
third, planning the elimination of the eleven million European Jews. Thus,
between the end of the summer of 1941 and the beginning of 1942, the anti-
Jewish Nazi policies that had started with the Nuremberg laws ended in the
Shoah, through the progressive radicalization of the persecution. And this
also shows that anti-Semitism and the loss of the rights of the Jews had been
the unavoidable premise of their persecution.

Hitler’s project had, from the outset, aimed at definitively resolving the
“Jewish question.” In the extermination, however, there was no implicit teleol-
ogy, and the final decision was probably “arrived at piecemeal,” in accordance
with procedures typical of a system of “organized disorder.” Franz Neumann
named this system “Behemoth” (the biblical antagonist of Leviathan), refer-
ringing to Nazi leaders, party organizations, broad sections of the army, leaders
of industry, bureaucrats, policemen, and willingly active citizens or ordinary
railway workers. The interpretation of the organization of the machinery
of concentration and extermination, proposed by Raul Hilberg, Ian Kershaw,
Martin Broszat, and Hans Mommsen (and, implicitly, by Neumann), has
been defined, by scholars, as “functionalist” or “structuralist,” even if it does
not in any way exclude Hitler’s personal responsibility and criminal intent
because this latter has been well documented by his biographers. Attention
to the system, structure, and method rather than to the intention of extermi-
nation does not exclude the presence of that intention, and it enables one to
understand better the decisive aspect of the bureaucratic, administrative, and
technical procedures with which the final solution was put into effect. The
failure to find a formal order by Hitler dated 1941 or 1942 does not, in any way,
constitute an insurmountable problem, as the negationists claim.

Up to 1938, the policy of intensifying persecution, all over occupied Europe,
by the elimination of rights and expulsion from offices, firms, and schools
(apart from the confiscation of property and other forms of harassment) had
aimed at effecting forced emigration, but, from 1941, the consequences of the war on the Eastern Front triggered the radicalization of these measures and constituted the context of the deportation and the extermination. In the second half of that year, in fact, there was a profound change in the course of the war because of the failure of the blitzkrieg against the Soviet Union. And this, together with the difficulty of deporting and assembling all the Eastern European Jews and the impossibility of controlling the more than three million Polish Jews living in the territories of the governorate, prompted the Nazi authorities to begin the extermination. Thus, there followed the mass shootings that led to the large-scale massacres like Babi Yar, near Kiev; subsequently, the carbon monoxide gassing in specially equipped lorries, that took place only in the Baltic region; and finally, in the third phase, the bureaucratic and industrial organization of extermination that repeated the technical solutions already adopted in the “euthanasia project” in Germany.  

Extermination, therefore, was also the consequence of the need to avoid actions that would be too disorganized and counterproductive for the direction of the war, and, certainly, this escalation began with the deadlock in the war of aggression against the USSR. But the Shoah was, at the same time, the ultimate effect of the mechanism put in motion by propaganda, falsification, and persecution (that is, by the legislative definition of the “Jew” and by the political decisions, taken by many European countries, well before 1939, and without any Nazi pressure, to discriminate against and persecute the Jews.)

The war in Eastern Europe only precluded the possibility of ending persecution by the expulsion and deportation to the East, posing explosive problems for the leaders of the Reich: the total elimination of the Russian Jews, the management of the ever more crowded labor and concentration camps, and the clearing of the Polish ghettos. From this point of view, the extermination was the result of a rational, administrative, and technical system and the consistent conclusion of propaganda, falsification, and persecution.

So the Shoah can be considered “modern” not only because it was organized with modern techniques but also because “the Jew” had been definitively adapted to the image derived from the forgeries of propaganda and of the anti-Jewish anticapitalist literature: the camp was a technical, modern way of translating into concrete terms the old hatred fueled by anti-Semitism, or anti-Jewish anti-capitalism, as an ideological war against modern freedoms, emancipation, and the alleged financial conspiracy against the national and Christian communities.

My conclusion proposes, again, the problem of the place of the extermination of the Jews in modern history and of the “uniqueness” of the Shoah, first
of all, in relation to the process embodied by the propaganda used to eliminate every characteristic of humanity from the people concentrated in the camps, and to the cultural tradition that prepared it. (At the same time, this uniqueness does not exclude the comparison between the Shoah and other genocides, nor does it exclude the attempt to construct a typology of the concentration camps, like that proposed by Andrzej Kamiński). The specificity, or rather the uniqueness, of the Nazi extermination lies in the fact that, for the first time, someone tried to establish who had and who did not have the right to live, bending science and technology to the plan of eliminating a part of humankind.

Nor did the end of the war interrupt the massacres. In Poland they continued even after the Nazis had been driven out, as in Kielce, on July 4, 1946, a year after the end of the war: it was not only a terrifying repetition of the popular uprisings in the Russian Empire in the early 1900s, but also a reaction by Polish society against the intolerable denunciation of its complicity with the Nazis (as in the case of the massacre of Jedwabne on July 10, 1941). The survivors, simply by their presence, represented an unbearable, indelible indictment.

Primo Levi wrote: “One cannot understand and one should not understand, because to understand almost means to justify.” The scandal of the apparent “gratuitousness” of the Shoah within the history of the Nazi plan for Lebensraum and the political-military elimination of Bolshevism leads to the paradoxical conclusion that the extermination was a “disinterested service” the Nazis wanted to offer to humanity in a sort of metaphysical mission, which on various occasions was detrimental to their military strategy.

Levi’s statement explains why the historical context of the Shoah does not cover all its aspects. If it is necessary to understand what happened, understanding the sources of the past may not be sufficient for historical knowledge. That is why, shortly before his death in an American hospital, Arnaldo Momigliano pointed out that the extermination of the Jews had been the work of “fascists and Nazis collaborating in sending millions of Jews to the death camps,” that “had only been possible thanks to the indifference” that derived from centuries of hostility on the part of Christians toward their “Jewish compatriots.”

Momigliano’s lesson has been of decisive importance for me. Nineteenth-century emancipation certainly changed the old legal framework of the ancien régime. The new anti-Jewish propaganda promoted in Western and Central Europe by the Catholic and Protestant churches against emancipation constituted the religious platform of their fight against the secularized
state, and in the new anti-Jewish anticapitalism there was the reemergence of these old themes, figures, and stereotypes of the anti-Jewish Christian tradition. And the final geography and history of European anti-Jewish legislation in the twentieth century amply demonstrates the large-scale dimension of the new anti-Semitism and its deep roots in nineteenth-century culture.

Even if the Nazi racist mythologies were condemned by Pius XI, the pontifical and episcopal pronouncements explicitly avoided including anti-Semitism, as such, in the condemnation: moreover, Rome never responded to the demands for a condemnation of the persecutions made, in August 1942, by the Greek Catholic metropolitan bishop of Lvov, Andrzej Szeptycki, and even earlier by the bishop of Berlin, Konrad von Preysing.  

The majority of the national Polish church did not want to acknowledge that the 1941 pogrom at Jedwabne had been perpetrated by “neighbors” without the instigation of the Nazi authorities. And it is known that in Ukraine, for example, the persecutions were effected with the active collaboration of the population and often of the clergy of the Uniate Church.

In his masterpiece, *Life and Fate*, never published in the Soviet Union and only published posthumously, Vasilij Grossman imagines that Anna Semerova, the mother of the protagonist Viktor Strum, on the threshold of being executed, writes a letter to her son in which she recounts how she had had to leave her home; undertake the long journey toward the “Middle Ages, of the ghetto”; then be deported to the death camp: the march of the Jews, burdened with heavy clothing despite the summer, took place between two rows of Ukrainians, “in shirtsleeves,” who watched with pitiless curiosity, rarely moved, often indifferent.

This indifference, wrote Momigliano, cannot be understood without delving into the hostile tradition. And Marrou added that our comprehension of the documents of the past uses the same cognitive process as the one employed by our understanding of the behavior of others and ourselves in the present. Therefore, understanding those who were indifferent in the past is a good premise for understanding our possible current inertia.

This may be the reason why Tzvetan Todorov says, “I am not interested in the past as such, but in the lesson which I think I can draw from it and which concerns us, today. But what is this lesson? Events by themselves never reveal their meaning and facts are never transparent. In order to teach us something, they need to be interpreted.” One of Todorov’s heroes is Marek Edelman who was a very young stretcher bearer in the Warsaw hospital during
the Nazi occupation. With a few other people Edelman organized the ghetto uprising, in 1943. All the Jewish rebels had were about ten pistols, a few kilos of explosives, and some hand grenades, but this handful of Jewish insurgents were a match for the Nazis for twenty days, even if few of them managed to escape the massacre. Edelman succeeded in doing so and also participated in the general revolt in the capital the following year, fighting the Germans once again and watching out for the Polish chauvinists while the Red Army played a waiting game on the other bank of the Vistula. After the war he became a doctor. On several occasions, he was harshly persecuted by the Polish communist regime, also for having protested against the expulsion of the students who were protagonists of the March 1968 revolt, in which the government saw yet another Jewish Zionist conspiracy. In the following years, he was also attacked for having supported the workers of Danzig and sided with KOR and Solidarnosc. In the mid-1990s, in Sarajevo, besieged by Serb militias and transformed into a new ghetto, Edelman saw a repetition of the scandal of the solitude of the Warsaw Jews and of the failure to provide assistance.

After all, even the Allies decided not to bomb Auschwitz. Edelman posed the problem of whether it is possible to reinterpret the drama of World War II in the light of the tragic experiences of the end of the twentieth century, like Bosnia and Kosovo. These shed new light on the most vexed issue: whether, between 1942 and 1945, it was possible to do more to limit or stop the extermination of Jews.

A scholar has to understand that if it is necessary to know in order to act, knowing implies that there is a willingness to act. It is unbelievable that there was no knowledge of the Nazi deportations and massacres since there is documentary evidence of the detailed information regarding the Shoah that reached the Allies. Certainly, it was difficult to believe the news of the Shoah, but if sometimes the incredulity was sincere, more often, it was culpable inertia. The point is that after Auschwitz, the unwillingness to admit the horror and shake off the laziness and inertia recurred.

**SHOAH AND ZAKHOR**

The decision of the United Nations to proceed with the establishment of the state of Israel and of a state for the Palestinian Arabs was dictated by the need to find refuge for the “seventh million,” the Jews who had escaped the destruction of six million of their European brethren. The seventh million had been reduced to the condition of displaced persons, and the transformation
of the old Jewish colonial and farming settlements, established since the 1920s in Palestine under a British mandate, into a new Jewish state can be considered a direct consequence of the Shoah.

Nor did the memory of the persecution and of the extermination immediately become, after May 1948, part of the collective identity of the new Jewish state; the commemoration transformed itself into memory over a much longer period of time. It would be years before it became a public narration that could be integrated in the public identity of the state of Israel. It has been maintained that, since the immediate postwar years, the formation of an Israeli identity has often clashed with the other Jewish identities, above all with that of the Diaspora. The parallel critical destiny of the different identities can nevertheless be perceived.

If any Jew can be challenged regarding the “place”—the territory, the status, the income, the community—that he has, with great difficulty, conquered for himself in the world, in exactly the same way, the political community of Israel has been always challenged regarding its “place,” that is, its right to be considered a sovereign state. Israel is in fact the only state whose existence is continually called into question, exactly as has happened to the Jews for centuries. For this reason, being morally blackmailed by the Shoah is decisive, even in the realm of historical reflection.

There was a strong continuity in the political culture and in the Jewish ruling class of Israel from the 1930s until the 1970s, in particular between the elite of the Histadrut—the Federation of Jewish Workers of Palestine and the Socialist Party Mapai—and the earliest ruling class of the state of Israel. The first phase of Zionist socialism can be considered the historic enterprise of a political group that was totally European and an expression of European political cultures. The Russian, Polish, Lithuanian, and German Zionist socialists established in Palestine were committed to a political project that was a synthesis of the principles of social justice, the rights of the workers, and national sovereignty; these Zionist socialist leaders and militants wanted a plan to reconcile the universalist ethic of justice with the one of national sovereignty, and they also represented an intellectual product of the Central and Eastern European Diaspora, which interpreted the spirit of the Exodus as a way out of the exile with the conquest of a “promised land.”

But nor did the promised land necessarily ever have to be represented by a given territory. Other Jews viewed the “promised land” differently way, and labor Zionism was only one of European Judaism’s many political responses (in particular among the Jews living in the settlement zone of the Russian
Empire) to the violent policies of discrimination, confinement, and persecution practiced by the tsarist regime, but it was also a response to the crisis of legal emancipation and to the anti-Semitic movements in Western Europe. Socialist Zionism represented one of those responses to anti-Jewish anticapitalism as the Jews of Central and Eastern Europe also cherished the democratic utopia of involving “the Chosen People” in the general and universal revolutionary emancipation of the proletarians, poor, and persecuted of all nations. And, of course, other important kinds of revolutionary socialism became popular among Jewish intellectuals, students, and workers, mainly in the peculiar form of the socialist program of the Bund, which aimed at realizing the autonomy of the Jewish proletariat within the overall revolutionary movement: paradigmatic, in this regard, were the alternating political options in the Bund at least from 1898 onward, when this party (the organization of the revolutionary Jews of Russia, Poland, and Lithuania) contributed decisively to the establishment of Russian social democracy. In 1903, the clash with the Iskra group forced the Bund to break away from the Russian Social Democratic Workers’ Party.85

The position of the leader of the socialist Zionists of the Histadrut and of the Israeli Labour Party, Ben-Gurion, should be located along the line that goes from Moses Hess, who was a communist and at the same time a Zionist, to Nachman Syrkin.86 The exodus toward the Promised Land represented, for them, the Jewish version of the redemption of all nations (including Italy, whose Risorgimento foreshadowed, according to Hess, the destiny of the Jewish people): if the Jewish fatherland embodied social justice, in harmony with the principles of the first ethical and monotheistic religion, it should be organized on the basis of a socialist economy, of collective ownership of the land by the trade unions and the cooperatives, of the institutions of a state founded on the workers’ federation of producers and the self-defense organizations.87

It has to be admitted that the Labor Zionist activists of Histadrut and the Mapai-Mapam alliance, who guided the Yshuv until 1948 and then the state of Israel until 1977, were not able to produce a constitutional text, a system of formal guarantees, or a consistently universalist welfare state system consistent with their socialist ideas. Nevertheless, their culture cannot be equated with those forms of community nationalism that arose in Central Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, founded on community traditionalism: socialist Zionism was different from the kind of nationalism codified in the texts of Barrès, Herder, and Gordon, based on the definition of fatherland
as a community of blood, family and corporation. And it was also different from right-wing Zionist culture as interpreted by Jabotinsky. 88

But, in any case, the labor Zionists of Yishuv suffered a double defeat. The Zionist option failed as a general alternative to the Diaspora, did not succeed in convincing European Jews to emigrate, and was defeated in its policy of financial agreements with the Third Reich, in favor of the emigration of German Jews, as well as, subsequently, Romanian, Slovak, and Hungarian Jews. 89 Gershom Scholem wrote,

Undoubtedly . . . other two developments are no less significant, even though there isn’t time today to do them justice. I am referring to the Shoah which we have witnessed, and to the creation of the State of Israel. The significance of these two developments for the history of Judaism cannot be over-estimated: in fact we will never again be able to look at Jewish history and the conditions of the life of the Jewish community in the same way. The Shoah has definitively and irrevocably cancelled a vision of things which had been possible until that moment; since then it has only been possible to consider Judaism as the continuation of a social totality, which certainly fought, receiving inspiration from important ideas but never being completely dominated or led by them. However, at the same time, the Shoah has cut the branch on which we were sitting: the great reserve of force, the developing generation, the hope of an enthusiastic youth which would have been energized by the idea of an inclusive image of Judaism and which was beginning to come into view . . . that generation died in Auschwitz and places of that kind. It would be futile to harbour illusions in this regard. We have suffered a loss of blood which has incalculable consequences for our spiritual and scientific creativity. 90

The Zionist socialists of Yishuv reacted to that watershed in Jewish history, that incalculable loss, that insurmountable trauma, by criticizing the choice of the Diaspora and attacking the alleged acquiescence of the European Jews to the Hitlerian new order. They uncritically extolled the heroic rebellions in the ghettos but also economically capitalized Europe’s debt (above all in the negotiations with the new German Federal Republic of Konrad Adenauer about compensation). They built the new mysticism of the Jewish state, defining it as a new redemption, a social liberation, and a political “Risorgimento,” but they wavered between a secular policy regarding memory and conspicu-
ouis doses of oblivion. As late as 1943, Ben Zion Dinur could have written that the *galut*, exile, not the Shoah, represented the supreme catastrophe.

By the wars of 1967 and 1973, when the veil of repression of the memory was finally rent and the memory of the Shoah began to be transformed into a new post-Zionist political religion, the new generations born in the territories were being subjected to a process of “re-Judaization.” The Israeli Army became the great protagonist of the commemorations and the presence of the military and of Israeli government authorities became more and more frequent also in European commemorations while, on a completely different front, the scaling down of the Shoah to a “sacred” dimension favored a parallel process of “victimization.”

What I wish to stress is that, in the various paths of Italian, Jewish Italian, European, and Israeli memories, one therefore finds enlightening analogies: the parallel repressions in the first ten or fifteen postwar years, the conflict between loyalty to the fatherland and internationally based ideologies, and the contradiction between national memory and different memories (as that of the Diaspora). At the same time, the fragile civil antifascist religion revolving around the figure of the partisan fighter can be juxtaposed with that of the Zionist myth of the new Jewish citizen, producer, and fighter, just as, once again, the people’s cult of all the dead, both military and civilian, through war, bombings, or reprisals, can be juxtaposed with Israeli victimization, the cult of collective pain.

For this reason, Stefano Levi Della Torre has contrasted two models of Jewish memory, whose archetypes—he argues—go back to two different destinies of ancient Israel. He writes that the tribes of the kingdom of Israel, “physically tied to the earth,” could not survive and disappeared once the link with the fatherland had gone because of the exile imposed on them by the Assyrians in 722 BC. Instead, the tribes of the kingdom of Judah, also expelled from their kingdom and dispersed in the Babylonian exile, about two centuries later, did not grasp the opportunity, granted them by Cyrus, of returning to Palestine. Thus, they managed to survive, despite living far from their own land, thanks to their loyalty to the faith of their fathers.

Della Torre means that in Judaism, side by side with the territorial link and with the national code, there has always coexisted a purely cultural and religious model so that adherence to the Torah and the memory of the Shoah can be constrained to either code, the national and territorial one or the religious and cultural one. Nevertheless the two models continue to clash, and both expect complete and full acceptance.
If the Shoah has become and represents only a function of a presumed identity centered on territory, namely the state of Israel, its memory will, naturally, be exposed to many risks: first of all, for example, to the risk of the possibility of canceling the historical relationship among the European crisis, Nazi totalitarianism, and the Shoah. The risk would be also to involve the memory of the Shoah in the controversy against Israeli government policies since the foundation of the state, and another danger would be to distort the historic destiny of the Jewish people and make it clash with that of the Arabs of Palestine. The predominance of the ethnic code, the need for sovereignty, and the political necessities of the Jewish state in contrast with the universalist paradigm of the monotheistic ethical culture and its Enlightenment secularization, could trap the memory of the Shoah in a nationalist representation.

It was for this reason that, in the immediate postwar years, Martin Buber fought so that the Yshuv could “realize itself” (as he wrote in 1947) on a supra-national basis. This would include the Arab nationalities because his ideal of a fatherland was not at variance with the Diaspora. On the contrary, the establishment of a different model of Zionism has resulted in the destiny of many Palestinian Arabs becoming similar to that of the Diaspora Jews: “departures, arrivals, farewells, exile, nostalgia, a sense of belonging, experience of travelling.” Buber thought that less of an obsession with territory and the deritualization of the religious dimension could have brought the Shoah back to the history of Europe and could also have encouraged the dialogue between the “new” Israeli Jews and their Arab fellows.

SOCIAL ANTI-SEMITISM AND ITS AFTERMATH

The European society that came into being between the end of the 1700s and the mid-1800s and the “Great Transformation” (the imposition of the free market and the continuous industrial revolutions), crashed between 1929 and 1939. The constitutional state, the rights of citizenship, and the freedom of the European Jews were destroyed almost everywhere between 1933 and 1945. The different forms of fascism were also a way of defending the free market from the convulsions of society.

The historical context of the age that began in 1945 (what Tony Judt defined as a sole and long Postwar) was, at least until the last two decades of the twentieth century, very different. Some lessons were learned from the catastrophe, and democracy and new procedures to regulate international criminal law and international trade were established, putting some order in the finan-
cial system and protecting society from the market with the policies of the welfare state. From the tragedy of the destruction of the European Jews there arose the state of Israel, whose history represents a part of European history, while the new Diaspora has been above all concentrated in the United States.

The paradigm of the cultural war against legal emancipation and the rights of freedom of the Jews has not disappeared, neither in the East nor in the West, as it is proved by the oscillating fortunes of the French Front National in the last three decades, the reemergence of Catholic nationalists in postcommunist Poland, the attainment of power by the Jobbik Party in Hungary in 2012, and many other examples. Undoubtedly, openly declared anti-Semitism has been, in the last two or three decades, a new social and cultural phenomenon, which is much more evident and widespread than it has been in the long postwar period, the welfare state era, and the new order based on the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man. Certainly, the racial phenomenology of anti-Semitism has diminished to the scale of a nocturnal cult practiced by neo-Nazi sects (sometimes by some biologists and sociologists), and the new anti-Semitic code can only be deciphered by observing the phenomenon in its new context, in which there exists a component of nationalist tradition (sometimes neo-fascist but also different, as in the case of the North Italian League or Haider’s liberal movement in Austria), as well as social and economic elements: those can often be traced back to the anti-Jewish anticapitalism originating in the nineteenth century, which I have analyzed in this study.

There are quite a few points of contact between these two components, but they are also intertwined with a third, which is much more recent. It does not derive from the legitimate criticism of the policies of Israeli governments toward the Arab populations of Palestine (in the last two decades not only ferociously unjust policies but also basically suicidal for Israel). This third component feeds on the hostility toward the state of Israel, inasmuch as it is a political community, a state that should be eliminated, because it is a political manifestation of the Jewish presence. In the propaganda disseminated among the Arab communities of Europe and often also in Islamic areas, Israel is in fact presented as an illegitimate colonial power and a Middle Eastern outpost of American capitalism (an extraordinary paradox: suffice it to bear in mind that the Soviet Union was the first country to recognize the Jewish state in 1948). So Israel and the United States are coupled in one symbolic representation, as colonial and capitalist powers, like the European Jews had been represented as powerful financial elites for two centuries.
It was clear as early as 1946 that the whole matter had not ended at Auschwitz. The 1,600 Polish Jews of the village of Jedwabne (from the Polish word for “silk”) who were massacred in 1941, after the arrival of the Nazis, were craftsmen with socialist and communist sympathies and some of them, together with their fellow Polish villagers, had celebrated the arrival of their Soviet “comrades” in 1939. They were not killed because of this, nor were they killed by the Nazis. They were horrendously massacred by bands of their fellow villagers, with the consent of the mayor and with the active participation of the whole neighboring population in order to rob them. In 1946, when more than three million Polish Jews had already been exterminated in the camps, the pogroms by the Poles against their Jewish compatriots—who had survived and were returning to their villages—restarted in Raeszów in June 1945, in Kielce in July, and in Krakow in August. It was not a question of the mere continuation of prewar or war-time behavior but rather of a reaction at the return of the survivors by a part of Polish society, the same one that had supported the Nazi campaign of persecution and deportation.

The Shoah had ended a few months earlier and, in the context of the seizure of power by the communists, the Poles once again attacked the Jews. They would wait for the trains bringing home the Jews from the concentration camps and would rob them. They also robbed the Poles who had hidden and protected the Jews, convinced that these fellow Poles had become rich thanks to their generous help. They refused to give back the houses of the Jews, which they had appropriated; they suspected the Jews of being Soviet agents. The old-new anti-Semitism made itself felt in society and was even used by the Polish Communist Party against political dissent, especially in the case of the expulsion of the militants of the student movement in 1968, who were accused of Trotskyism and Zionism. After the Six-Day War of 1967 between Israel and the Arab League, the fact that many militants of the student movement and the new heretics were “Jews” constituted the real basis for accusing the dissidents of Zionism. Similar phenomena had occurred in the Soviet Union and in other “popular democracies” after the 1956 Suez War, and even earlier, on the occasion of the Slansky trial in Hungary. So this was not something new, but it involved thousands of people in Poland, a state that had been subjected to a Nazi military occupation aimed at constructing a slave economy (the lebensraum of the Third Reich) and had been the place of the implementation of the extermination of the Jews of the whole of Europe.

On the other hand, in Western Europe, the Protestant and Lutheran churches were quicker in eliminating the dogmatic anti-Judaic tradition, but
the Catholic Church waited until 1965 and the publication of the encyclical Nostra Aetate in order to overcome its intransigent approach: it was only in 1982 that the Polish pope John Paul II visited the Rome synagogue. But 1982 was a crucial year because social anti-Semitic propaganda had reappeared often in the texts that described the state of Israel as a part of capitalist power and Western imperialism: capitalism had imposed itself through the finance of the Jews of the whole world.

This new anti-Jewish anticapitalism and anti-Semitism was especially strong in France; in a Parisian synagogue, a bomb killed four people. But in Berlin, a Jewish child was killed in a restaurant, and there were other victims in Vienna, Antwerp, and again in Paris, in 1981 and 1982. Finally, in Rome, in October 1982 another child was killed. The 1982 war in Lebanon and the inertia of Tshal in the face of the massacres of Palestinians by Christian Maronite forces permitted a representation of the “enemy” (Israel and the Jews) as the embodiment of the worst aspect of Western capitalist society: in France and in Italy, for example, there were propaganda texts in which the massacres of Sabra and Shatila were described as “Jewish massacres.”

The category of “hatred” does not permit the deciphering of anti-Semitism nor its logical definition. Hatred of the Jews did not, in fact, manifest itself in relation to, and in proportion with, the Jewish religious difference, but rather with regard to a new and unforeseen “similarity.” The Jew has been perceived as being similar to the Christian, in fact the “Christian’s elder brother,” but the Jewish brother has always been a competitor of the Christian, therefore a dangerous rival. And the Jewish threat in the Christian societies of the ancien régime in Europe was not only that of the clash between the two opposing interpretations of the truth and of the Bible; it was the threat of the separate-ness of privilege, that is, of the power of money allied to the power of the sovereigns.

It was like this until the beginning of the free-market economy, when in the manifestations of anti-Jewish anticapitalism, after the advent of market society and the introduction of legal emancipation, there appeared new reactions against the rights of citizenship introduced by the constitutional revolution and by the declaration of 1789. These political events had made the Jews equal in everything and therefore impossible to identify because they would have been able to act, protected by anonymity. The malaise of the civilization that had arisen from the industrial revolutions easily directed itself at the enemy represented by the Jewish, by the capitalists, and the antinational capitalists.
In the age of the rivalry between the European imperial powers, the Jewish Diaspora could be represented as an internal enemy that had infiltrated the national society and had been made invisible by legal equality: paradoxically, it was the nationalists, the populists, and the communitarians who projected on to the Jews their own imperialist designs of control and domination. Since the second half of the nineteenth century and still today, the anti-Semites imagine themselves to be the victims of Jewish imperialism and of the conspiracy of an “informal” Jewish power spread throughout the world.

Today, however, this power—rather than the informal, widespread global power that was the European Jewish Diaspora—is the biggest new Diaspora community, the Jews of the United States. The great difference is this: Today world Jewish power also has a guiding state, Israel, and this new factor has modified the political morphology of the anti-Jewish anti-capitalism. The universalism of rights and the 1791 emancipation were considered the effect of the conspiracy and hence the political character of Judaism—political because Jewish financial power would have translated itself into a means of gaining political domination—and anti-Jewish anticapitalism managed to attain important results only after World War I, through the persecution laws in almost the whole of Europe. Today, the conquest of Jewish national self-determination in 1948 has modified the political morphology of anti-Jewish anticapitalism, and, thus, often the political criticism of the policies of Israeli governments has transformed into an attack against Israel as a political entity, and consequently against all the “power” of Judaism, now represented as different political entities: the Israeli state and the capitalist United States. “Judaism” is power because Israel is an actual political power and because the American Diaspora is a financial power. This is the new political morphology of the old anti-Jewish anticapitalism, though there are, nevertheless, important differences to be noted. For the Islamists, the condemnation of “Zionist” prevarications regarding the Palestinians is intertwined with an antimodern reaction; at the same time, in the “anticapitalist” components of many xenophobic Western movements, community and self-pitying ideology prevail. In some “antiglobal” demonstrations, finally, the Jewish state continues to be seen as the military outpost of the great power of imperialism.

The modifications that have occurred in the representations and rhetoric therefore are not easy to decipher because they also reflect the need for political opposition against current Jewish self-representations. This has happened in Europe and the West, as well as against the public memory of the state of Israel. And it could be said that the image of Israel (and consequently,
that of “diasporic” Judaism) is placed at the intersection of the memory and the heredity of the Shoah and the heredity and responsibilities of European colonialism.

Israel and current Judaism are symbolically represented as the heirs of the victims of the extermination of the European Jews and of their legal and social persecution, prepared by decades of propaganda against emancipation and assimilation. But Israel’s prevarications against the Arab populations of Palestine (not “justified” by the legitimate need to defend itself from the wars of aggression of the Arab states or from the terrorism of more recent years) also permit the propagandists to present all Jews as the modern representatives of the colonial powers. \(^{103}\) And in the new morphology of anti-Jewish anticapitalism, the attribution to world Judaism (Israel included) of being a colonial and imperial power reacts against and conceals the representation of the Jews as victims of ancient European history, which led to Auschwitz. Actual historical reality, with its many facets, is thus reduced to a purely symbolic reality or to the sole reality of language of propaganda.

What I have tried to do here has been to dissolve the claims of language to build the whole reality and to bring back into the light of day reality and its language.
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12. This seems to me to be the main limit of the essay by Simon Levis Sullam, *L’archivio antiebraico. Il linguaggio dell’antisemitismo moderno* (Rome: Laterza, 2008), 11 and 89ff. Sullam declares his adherence to the methodological principles of Foucault and Derrida, on the one hand, and Austin and Skinner, on the other hand.


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26. Alexandre Koyré, Réflexions sur le mensonge (1943; Paris: Allia, 1998), in Italian: Sulla menzogna politica, trans. Claudio Traditi (Turin: Lindau, 2010), 32–33. This essay was first published in Renaissance: Revue Trimestrielle de l’École des Hautes Études 1, no. 1 (January–March 1943), and translated into English with the title “The Political Function of The Modern Life” in Contemporary Jewish Records (Review of the American Jewish Committee) 8, no. 3 (June 1945): 290ff.

27. Pierre-André Taguieff, La nouvelle judéophobie (Paris: Mille et une nuits, 2002), 20–21, states that the most recent metamorphoses of Judeophobia respond to a demand for meaning from the orphans of the myth of the Revolution.

28. One of the first replies to the negationists’ “theses” was that of Nadine Fresco, “Les redresseurs des morts. Chambres à gaz: la bonne nouvelle. Comment on révise l’histoire,” Les Temps Modernes 407 (June 1980): 2150–211. The commitment shown by Fresco and Vidal-Naquet was also taken up in Deborah Esther Lipstadt, Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory (New York: Penguin, 1994). A deeper analysis of the negationists’ rhetorical strategies was later undertaken in Valentina Pisanty, L’irritante questione delle camere a gas. Logica del negazionismo (Milan: Bompiani, 1998), 85–130, which confirmed how they combine the claim of demonstrating the many alleged errors committed by the supporters of the reality of the extermination, the falsification of the sources (the “fabrication at the writing table”), the erroneous attribution of the eye-witness accounts, the non-truthfulness of the accounts, and their mistaken interpretation. A typical example is the method followed by Mattogno and Roques in the case of the so-called Gerstein Report: see Carlo Mattogno, Il rapporto Gerstein. Anatomia di un falso (Parma: La Sfinge, 1985); and Henri Roques, “De l’affaire Gerstein à l’affaire Roques,” conférence d’H. Roques à la 8ème conférence annuelle révisionniste, Institute for Historical Review, Los Angeles October 9–11, 1987, Annex V, in H. Roques, Les confessions de Kurt Gerstein. Étude comparative des différentes versions, thèse soutenue à l’Université de Nantes le 15


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2. “Above all when there is the disruption and collapse of the established order . . . the tales of hidden gold are boundless. At one of those times, in the last month of the German occupation, Pardo and his guests were massacred. The wealth which had for so long protected him finally proved fatal” (Carla Forti, Il caso Pardo Roques. Un eccidio del 1944 tra memoria e oblio [Turin: Einaudi, 1998], 81). See also Silvano Arieti, The Parnas (New York: Basic Books, 1979), 10ff.

3. An excellent study of the relations between the Nazis and the heads of industry is Henry A. Turner, German Big Business and the Rise of Hitler (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985). Also of fundamental importance are Timothy W. Mason,
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14. The constitution “licet perfidia Iudaorum” is in Heinrich Denzinger, Enchiridion symbolorum, definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum, bilingual version, ed. Peter Hünemann (Bologna: EDB, 2003), nn. 772–73.


21. Alphonse Toussenel, Les juifs, rois de l’époque. Histoire de la féodalité financière, réimprimée et précédée d’une Préface, d’une notice biographique sur l’auteur et accompagnée des notes hors texte de l’éditeur (Paris: Marpon et Flammarion, 1886), xxxiv: this edition was printed following the success of Édouard Drumont, La France juive (1885), though the first edition (1845) had been attacked and repudiated by many members of the editorial management of the Libraire Phalanstérienne, the Fourierist publishing house.


24. This was the thesis upheld by in Abbé Barruel, Abrégé des Mémoires pour servir à l’histoire du Jacobinisme (London: Le Boussonier, 1799), iii.


36. La Civiltà Cattolica 32 (1881): 108, but analogous arguments are also in Paul de Lagarde, Deutsche Schriften (Göttingen, n.d.); regarding these aspects, the following work remains of fundamental importance: Fritz R. Stern, The Failure of Illiberalism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), 38ff.
44. See Cople Jaher, The Jews and the Nation, 28; as well as Jacob Katz, Out of the Ghetto: The Social Background of Jewish Emancipation, 1770–1870 (New York: Schocken Books, 1978); and Jonathan Frankel and Steven J. Zipperstein, Assimilation and
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64. Ibid., 38–43, 84.


68. Robert Anchel, *Napoléon et les juifs. Essai sur les rapports de l’État français et du culte israélite de 1806 à 1815* (Paris: Alcan, 1928), 201. An echo of the moral economy of the working class, apart from Bonald, is also in Gabriel Bonnot de

70. Ibid., 428–29.
71. Ibid., 430.
72. Ibid., 437.
73. Ibid., 442.
74. Ibid., 438.
75. Ibid.
77. A good number of these documents are studied in Arnaud Lods, Centenaire de l’Édit du 17 Novembre 1787. Les partisans et les adversaires de l’Édit de tolérance. Étude bibliographique et juridique 1750–1789 (Paris, n.d. [1887]).
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82. Bonald, “Sur l’économie politique,” in Bonald, Mélanges, 297ff., and “Sur le prêts à intérêt,” ibid., 286ff. However, the most important of his studies of economy and “sociology” is undoubtedly De la famille agricole, de la famille industrielle et du droit d’aïnesse, par le Vicomte de Bonald pair de France (Paris: Beaucé-Rusand, 1826), 3–20, which was commented on and developed in Frédéric Le Play, L’organisation de la famille selon le vrai modèle signalé par l’histoire de toutes les races et de tous les temps (Paris: Tequi, 1871), xxvff. On the criticism of the classical political economy from the Catholic point of view, see Donald K. Cohen, “The Vicomte de Bonald’s Critique of Industrialism,” Journal of Modern History 41, no. 4 (1969): 475–84.


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89. After a youthful fascination with Saint-Simon, Balzac would convert to the political theology of de Maistre, reinterpreted in a Caesaristic key, and to the apologetics of the rural world; according to him, the peasants had been “ruined” by the usury and speculation of Jewish finance. See Ernst Robert Curtius, *Balzac* (1923), trans. Henri Jourdan (Paris: Grasset, 1933); 170ff.; also György Lukács, *Balzac et le réalisme français* (Paris: Maspero, 1973), 19–47.


91. Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, *Césarisme et Christianisme (de l'an 45 avant J.-C. à l'an 476 après)*, précédé d'une préface par J.-A. Langlois (Paris: Marpon et Flammarion, 1883), 1:133ff. The work was published posthumously, eighteen years after the author’s death, but as early as 1869 his student, Georges Duchène, referred to the legacy of the master in order to defend the Russian pogroms, which had to be explained as a sound and just reaction of “honest people” against the “parasites, usurers, and exploiters of the people” (Georges Duchène, *L'empire industriel* [Paris: Librairie Central, 1869], 196). On the point at issue, see also Daniel Halévï, *La vie de Proudhon 1809–1847* (Paris: Stock, 1948), which also refers to the reception accorded to the work of Toussenel, including in Proudhon’s *Les confessions d’un révolutionnaire* (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1849), in the text of Théodore Dézamy, *L’organisation de la liberté* (Paris: Nellier, 1846).

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97. Ibid., 145–78.

98. I am referring to Georges Vacher de Lapouge, *Les sélections sociales. Cours libre de science politique professé a l’Université de Montpellier* (Paris: A. Fontemoing, 1896). Lapouge writes: “What we are speaking of is a necessary segregation, and its end is eliminating some defects and faults in the human race. Training the masses about the ideas of biological inheritance, evolution, natural selection should be absolutely necessary” (468). He continues: “This aristocratic and socialist vision of social and political selection lays on everybody’s consent, and it has, as a direct consequence, the consent of each citizen. As far as I know, it is the first time that the dreadful problem of the division of labor and labor management (which is very well solved in the animal societies) has been faced as regards human societies” (470).


102. An example of the anti-Jewish documents produced during the März is Adolf Buchheim, *Judenpech*, leaflet, March 23, 1848, in Sammlungen, Plakate, Flug-


105. Pulzer, The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria, 152.

106. The complete text of the program is in Eduard Pichl, Georg Schönerer (Berlin: Oldenburg, 1938); but see also Carl E. Schorske, Vienna fin de siècle (Milan: Bompiani, 1981), 197ff.


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119. Drumont repaid the appreciation in his next book, *La fin d’un monde. Étude psychologique et social* (Paris: A. Savine, 1889), 122: “What a sympathetic and nice guy that Be Benoît Malon! He is a man of the people, just that kind of man coming from the old French tradition! [Quelle figure sympathique et bonne que celle de Benoît Malon! C’est l’homme du peuple tel qu’il est sorti de la vieille tradition française!”

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121. Chirac, Les rois de la République, 489.
122. The best study of the production of this fake is Cohn, Warrant for Genocide, which retraces the operation to the background of the Dreyfus Affair and to the anti-Semitic reaction to the Zionist Congress of Basle, 1897.
124. Cohn, Warrant for Genocide, 77; Taguieff, ed., Les Protocoles des Sages de Sion, 1:8; De Michelis, Il manoscritto inesistente, 276.
126. De Michelis, Il manoscritto inesistente, 32.
127. Ibid., 44. According to De Michelis, “a basic text of Slav Orthodox culture,” chap. 13 of the Vita Constantini, containing the prophecy of the coming of Christ 909 years after the so-called conspiracy of Solomon (instead of 929), would be the source of the passage in the Protocols about Solomon. See also Martin Noth, Storia d’Israele (Brescia: Morcelliana, 1975), 277–78.
129. De Michelis, Il manoscritto inesistente, 50. De Michelis defines Maurice Joly’s book as the real subtext of the Protocols (240). Regarding Osman Bey, La conquête du monde par les juifs (Basel: Krüsi, 1873), see Cohn, Warrant for Genocide, 184ff.
131. De Michelis, Il manoscritto inesistente, 76.
132. I am referring to the translation by Mons. Umberto Benigni: “I documenti della conquista ebraica del mondo. Parte Prima. I protocolli dei saggi anziani di Sion,” Fede e Ragione, supplements to nos. 13–21 and 23–26 (1921); in the same year there appeared Giovanni Preziosi’s translation (for which he provided an introduction and edited the work): Sergyei Nilus, L’Internazionale ebraica. I “protocoll” dei “savi anziani” di Sion (Rome: La Vita Italiana, 1921). See Ernest Jouin,

133. De Michelis, Il manoscritto inesistente, 240.


141. The fund raising was the idea of the writer Marie-Anne de Bovet: see the appeal, signed by her, “Aux braves gens,” La Libre Parole, December 13, 1898. Regarding the attitude of Ferdinand Brunetière, anti-Dreyfus but opposed to anti-Semitism, see Antoine Compagnon, Connaissez-vous Brunetière? Enquête sur un antidreyfusard et ses amis (Paris: Seuil, 1997), 35–49 (and regarding that of Paul Déroulède: Joly, Déroulède. L’inventeur du nationalisme français, 227ff.).

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147. In fact here de Maistre contradicts what he had stated on page 2, in enunciating the thesis of his own anthropological pessimism: “Everything in the works of man is as abject as their author.”


150. Regarding this point, see Luciano Cafagna, “Tocqueville dalla democrazia in America all’aristocrazia in Francia,” introduction to De Tocqueville, L’Antico Regime, viii; as well as Onofrio Nicastro, introduction to Thomas Hobbes, Behemoth (1668), It. trans., Behemoth (Rome: Laterza, 1979), v–lii.


156. See Birnbaum, *Le peuple et les gros*, 265.


182. Ibid., 3.

183. Ibid., 42ff.

184. Ibid., 8–9, 11–12.

185. Of Johann Gottfried Herder’s works, Arendt cites “Auch eine Philosophie der Geschichte zur Bildung der Menschheit” (1774) and, in particular, the “Erläuterungen zum Neuen Testament,” book 1, 3 (see Arendt, “The Enlightenment and the Jewish Question,” 13–15).


189. Cf. *Within Four Walls: The Correspondence between Hannah Arendt and Heinrich Blücher 1936–1968* (New York: Harcourt, 2000), 40–41. Hannah Arendt was never a communist, but in 1932 she stated that being Jewish had become, for her,


192. Ibid., 283, 288–97.


205. Ibid., 100–111.

206. Ibid., 102ff.

207. Ibid., 107–9.

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2. **European “National Socialism” and Its Propaganda**


6. “Di un recente libro pro Iudaeis,” *La Civiltà Cattolica* 36, no. 9 (1885): 33, 39. The *Pro Iudaeis*, printed in Recoaro in 1883, was attributed to a lawyer, Corrado Guidi, perhaps a pseudonym—according to the writer of the periodical—of a “Jewish author.” “The proof” of the links between “Judaism” and Freemasonry was to be found in Heinrich Leberecht Albanus and Henri Roger Gougenot des Mousseaux, *Le juif, le judaïsme et la judaïsation des peuples chrétiens* (Paris: Plon, 1869). In the next issue of the periodical there was an account of Prof. A. Neubahner’s lecture, delivered at the Royal Anthropological Institute in London, on Jewish biological and anthropological characteristics: “Postilla sopra la razza ebraica,” *La Civiltà Cattolica* 36, no. 10 (1885): 60. On the role of Jews in Freemasonry, see also: “Saggio critico sulla società massonica,” *La Civiltà Cattolica* 20, no. 7 (1869): 397ff., and *La Civiltà Cattolica* 14, no. 8 (1863): 418ff.


René de La Tour du Pin, “La représentation professionnelle,” *L’Action Française* (August 1908), reprint, in *La Tour du Pin, Vers un ordre social chrétien*, 308. *La Civiltà Cattolica* also openly supported the anti-Semitic movements in France. In vol. 40 (1889), the Third Republic was defined as “a country governed by an oligarchy which has emerged from an alliance among Jacobinism, Freemasonry, and Judaism. And from this perspective, the French government is very similar to the Italian one.”


La Tour du Pin, “La représentation professionnelle,” 308.


This consensus has been pointed out in Jean-Philippe Parrot, *La représentation des intérêts dans le mouvement des idées politiques* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1974), 50-51.


Ferdinand Brunetière, “Après une visite au Vatican,” *Revue des Deux Mondes* 65, no. 127 (January 1, 1895). The importance of this article has been pointed out in Luisa Mangoni, *Una crisi di fine secolo. La cultura italiana e la Francia tra Otto e Novecento* (Turin: Einaudi, 1985), 3-5. On the Italian reactions to the article,


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41. Ibid., 24.
42. Ibid., 46.
43. Ibid., 51.
44. Ibid., 126.

50. Maurras, L’idée de décentralisation, 24.


56. Sternhell, La droite révolutionnaire, 38–73.


63. See Jean Rivain, “Les socialistes antidémocratiques,” L’Action Française (daily newspaper), March 15, 1907. I am referring to the vision of the authoritarian state developed in Georges Valois, La monarchie et la classe ouvrière (Paris: Éditions de l’Action Française, 1914), xxvff.; on this text by Valois, see Paul Mazgaj, The

64. For a comparison with the Italian culture of that period, see Silvio Lanaro, “La guerra multanime dei nazionalisti,” Meridiana 6 (1989): 151–53; as well as Silvio Lanaro, Nazione e lavoro. Saggio sulla cultura borghese in Italia (Venice: Marsilio, 1979). This theme has been taken up again recently in Eleonora Belloni, Ideologia dell’industrializzazione e borghesia imprenditoriale. Dal nazionalismo al fascismo 1907–1925 (Manduria: Lacaita, 2008).


66. Ibid., 59, 62–63.


Both Auguste Comte’s *Rapport sur la nature et le plan du gouvernement révolutionnaire de la République Française* (1848) and his *Cours de philosophie positive* are quoted in Charles Maurras, “Dictateur ou Roi,” in *Oeuvres Capitales* (Paris: Flammarion, 1973), 86ff.

“To generate good words, platitudes, insignificant verses in an eight-year-old brain, what a triumph of worldly culture! It was the last act of a regime that, after having removed man from public affairs and his own, from marriage, family, took him with all his faculties and feelings. . . . When the Revolution came, the rupture was even greater. Have a look at the harangues from the platform or in clubs, at the relationships and motivations of the laws, at the pamphlets: . . . in these texts the human creature is always seen as a mere automaton” (Hippolyte Taine, *Les origines de la France contemporaine*, part 1, *Lancien régime* [Paris: Hachette, 1875], 10:214, 314, 49). See also Hippolyte Taine, *Histoire de la littérature anglaise* (Paris: Hachette, 1864), 1:xxxiiiff. For a commentary, see Jean-Thomas Nordmann, “Taine et le positivisme,” *Romantisme. Revue du XIXe siècle* 21–22 (1978): 21ff.; and Regina Pozzi, *Hippolyte Taine. Scienze umane e politica nell’Ottocento* (Venice: Marsilio, 1993), 61–73.


Ibid., 85.

Maurras, *Mes idées politiques*, 70, 126. Maurras writes: “This unity [of France], however solid, spontaneous, and natural it may seem today, is in fact solely the work of our sovereigns: nature had been satisfied to make it possible, neither necessary nor inevitable, but our sovereigns created and shaped it, just as an artist confers his own personal imprint on the selected material” (103).

Ibid., 280, 281.
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84. A French observer of the corporative economy provided a lucid analysis of the differences within the world of corporatism: see Louis Rosenstock-Franck, *L'économie corporative fasciste en doctrine et en fait. Ses origines historiques et

85. “Have you personally gained a lot from French culture?—A great deal. From Renan, for philosophical problems; from Sorel, for revolutionary syndicalism and other current questions; and then, above all, from the giant Balzac” (Emil Ludwig, Colloqui con Mussolini [Milan: Mondadori, 1932], 153).


88. Benito Mussolini, *La dottrina del fascismo, con una storia del movimento fascista di Gioacchino Volpe* (Milan: Treves-Treccani-Tumminelli, Biblioteca della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1933), part 2, 15; it is the entry “Dottrina del fascismo” (Doctrine of fascism) in the *Enciclopedia Italiana* (Italian encyclopedia), the first part drawn up by Giovanni Gentile and the second (la “Dottrina politica e sociale”) by Benito Mussolini; however, the text was only signed by Mussolini. According to Giovanni Giudice, *Benito Mussolini* (Turin: Einaudi, 1969), 504, Mussolini also reworked Gentile’s text, but, according to Renzo De Felice, *Mussolini il duce. Gli anni del consenso (1929–1936)* (Turin: Einaudi, 1974), 35, it was instead Mussolini who accepted Gentile’s approach. The influence of Renan’s texts on Mussolini’s works had already been noted in Henri Massoul, “M. Mussolini chez Renan,” *Le Temps*, March 22, 1933. The following year, Massoul, published one of the most popular French texts about the thought of the Italian leader: *La leçon de Mussolini: comme meurt une démocratie, comme naît une dictature* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1934). See Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Segreteria particolare del Duce, Carteggio riservato (1922–43), fasc. 251/R, *Enciclopedia Treccani*, in De Felice, *Mussolini il duce. Gli anni del consenso*, 36ff.


90. Ibid., 17.


99. See the program of Le Faisceau in *Le Producteur* 1 (June 1920): 21–44.


105. Claude Lévi-Strauss wrote: “I was the secretary of the Socialist Study Group of the five Écoles Normales Supérieures, even though I was not a normaliste, and I was also secretary general of the Federation of Socialist Students. . . . Those to whom I was most attached are dead: Pierre Boivin, and then Georges Lefranc, with whom however I had lost touch. I also knew Marcel Déat well. . . . I knew him when I was working as the secretary of a socialist deputy, to earn some money in the years prior to the agrégation, the open competition for qualification as a teacher. The deputy was called Georges Monnet. Therefore I regularly went to the Chamber of Deputies when Marcel Déat was the secretary of the socialist group” (Claude Lévi-Strauss and Didier Eribon, *De près et de loin* [Paris: Odile Jacob, 1988], 17). See also Claude Lévi-Strauss, “French Sociology,” in *Twentieth Century Sociology*, ed. Georges Gurvitch and Wilbert E. Moore (New York: Philosophical Library, 1945). These aspects of Lévi-Strauss’s political biography have also been dealt with by Denis Bertholet, *Claude Lévi-Strauss* (Paris: Plon, 2003), 37–65.


2. European “National Socialism” and Its Propaganda


125. Le Nouveau Siècle, July 29, 1926 (table on the first page).


127. Valois, L’homme contre l’argent, 118.


129. Valois, Un nouvel âge de l’humanité, 141; and Valois, “Appel aux techniciens,” 1, “Appel général,” Cahiers Bleus, April 20, 1929, 8. Finally, see André Fourgeaud (at the time, a lecturer in economics at the University of Toulouse), La rationalisation. États Unis-Allemagne (Paris: Payot, 1929).


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138. Hans Freyer, Revolution von Rechts (Jena: Diederichs, 1931), 67. On Freyer, see Klaus Fritzsche, Politische Romantik und Gegenrevolution. Fluchtweg aus der Krise der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft. Das Beispiel des Tat-Kreises (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1976). In Preussentum und Sozialismus (Munich: Beck, 1919), Spengler writes: “Let’s become men! We no longer need ideologies and speeches about civilization, the universal bourgeoisie and Germany’s spiritual mission: what we need is toughness, a bolder skepticism, and a class of socialist dominators [Herrennaturen]. Once again: socialism means power and even more power” (98). Regarding this text, see Theodor W. Adorno, “Spengler nach dem Untergang,” in Theodor W. Adorno, Prismen, vol. 10 of Gesammelte Schriften (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1977), 69ff.; and on Spengler’s ties with the German industrial world, see


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5. De Michelis (ibid., 225n128), without any explanation, cites an article published on March 3, 1908, in *Il Giornale d’Italia*: “Il falso Calvino a Roma.”


10. This judgment has also been repeated in the most recent research: Marie-Anne Matard-Bonucci, *L’Italie fasciste et la persecution des juifs* (Paris: Perrin, 2007), 104ff.


12. See, above all, Pietro De Francisci, Civiltà romana (Rome: Istituto Nazionale di Cultura Fascista, 1939), 143; and Giovanni Marro, Caratteri fisici e spirituali della razza italiana (Rome: Istituto Nazionale di Cultura Fascista, 1939), 55ff. (De Francisci replaced Gentile as head of the institute in 1937, as a scholar of the ancient world; Marro, an anthropologist and psychiatrist, was the director of the Turin Anthropology Museum). Finally, see Giacomo Acerbo, I fondamenti della dottrina fascista della razza (Rome: Ministero della Cultura Popolare—Ufficio Studi e Propaganda sulla Razza, 1940), 71–93.


14. Orano reacted to this attack by adopting a more extreme position and by publishing Inchiesta sulla razza (Rome: Pinciana, 1939), an anthology of racial texts, from Aponte to Rosenberg. On the radicalization of the GUF, see Simone Duranti, Lo spirito gregario. I gruppi universitari fascisti fra politica e propaganda 1930–1940 (Rome: Donzelli, 2008).


17. Delio Cantimori, preface to de Felice, Storia degli ebrei italiani, xiii.


20. Giuseppe Bottai, Diario 1935–1944 (Milan: Rizzoli, 1982), 323. Camille Mallarmé was Paolo Orano’s second wife; the first was Gina Fantocchiani.

21. As has already been noted, the characteristics of the culture of crisis have been perfectly described in Luisa Mangoni, Una crisi di fine secolo. La cultura italiana e la Francia tra Otto e Novecento (Turin: Einaudi, 1985), 15ff.


23. This fear was expressed in Eugène-Melchior de Vogüé, “Après M. Renan,” Revue des Deux Mondes 62, no. 114 (November 15, 1892); see also Gabriel Tarde, “Foules et sectes au point de vue criminal,” Revue des Deux Mondes 63, no. 120 (November 15, 1893).

24. Scipio Sighele, La delinquenza settaria (Milan: Flli Treves, 1897), 31ff., 42. The archetype of this kind of literature was obviously Cesare Lombroso, L’uomo delinquente (Milan: Hoepli, 1876), but Sighele’s work is the prime example of this category of literature from the end of the century.


44. The first two texts, from 1893 and 1900, were printed by the publishers Civelli and Lux, while *Cristo e Quirino* was published by Fratelli Bocca in 1899 (and had various reprints); in 1908 the studies were collected in Paolo Orano, *Cristo e Quirino. Il problema del cristianesimo* (Turin: Elli Bocca, 1908) (I am quoting from this edition, p. 48).

45. Orano, *Cristo e Quirino*, xxi, xxv, 16, xxxi.

46. Ibid., 54, 76–80.

47. Ibid., 131ff., 215, 260.


49. Despite the view of de Felice, *Storia degli ebrei italiani*, 38–52, *La Lupa* came out on October 16, 1910. Paolo Orano appeared to be the editor, and his collaborators included Paolo Mantica, Arturo Labriola, Alberto Micheli, Édouard Berth, Nino Massimo Fovel, Alberto Niceforo, Mario Missiroli, Charles Péguy, and Georges Sorel. Published in Florence by the Casa Editrice Italiana, the newspaper contin-
ued until October 1911. “La Lupa is a weekly publication edited by someone who finds himself equidistant from all the points of the political spectrum, a weekly publication offering independent criticism of the totality of Italian and foreign affairs, a broadsheet of principles, without prejudice toward those having different principles, as long as they are presented with frankness and sincerity. . . . At the time when there is the most urgent and clear need for a consolidation of opposing views and aims, a vacuum, a grey uniformity of outlooks and intentions has appeared and prevails. Thus it has happened that the politics of insincerity has begun: names and definitions have been adopted by men lacking in the simplicity and pride in their convictions, which are the only things that can confer prestige and vigor to principles; thus it has happened that the parliamentary scene has presented spectacles in which the honest observer can no longer recognize men, parties, or programs. We are the mavericks of any political party, but we also want to live life to the full. . . . We will face every battle, aware that true human nobility is that idea, the greatest human quality is that of clear intentions, the most beautiful expression is that of the unrelenting battle that increases the combatants’ moral worth. We continue, we begin, fortified by an experience that has not exhausted or disillusioned us but that spurs us on to ask, of the future, a quicker, more alert, more resolute energy” (“Avviso,” La Lupa, October 16, 1910, 1).

50. [Paolo Orano], “Socialismo in margine,” La Lupa, October 30, 1910 (the editor was responsible for the anonymous interventions and commentaries); and Nino Massimo Fovel, “Dai radicali di Alba all’alba dei radicali,” La Lupa, October 30, 1910.

51. [Paolo no] “Corsivo,” La Lupa, October 30, 1910. See also the “Nota Redazionale,” La Lupa, November 6, 1910: “We want to concern ourselves with what is alive in modern society and even more with what is most alive for us, because we are people who study, think, criticize, who have artistic, literary, philosophical tastes or rather passions, also about race and even religion. We do not want to be prisoners of a single formula, . . . we want to carry out an act of will, force, beauty, but above all of sincerity, far from the half measures of a sect or a party, capable of thinking with our brains, the lovers of, and the believers in, an idea and its denial, because hatred is a form of love.”


53. Paolo Orano, “Per la salvezza del principio,” La Lupa, November 13, 1910. See also Paolo Orano, “Giovanni Giolitti,” La Lupa, January 15, 1912 (in this article Orano hoped for an alliance among Catholics, conservatives, nationalists, and
revolutionary syndicalists in order to attain “the definitive victory over Giovanni Giolitti”). Regarding Luzzatti, I refer the reader to Jules Destrée, *Figures italiennes d’aujourd’hui* (Brussels: Van Oeest, 1918), 55–64. See also this judgment on Luzzatti, published in the article “Il gioco di Luzzatti,” *La Lupa*, February 26, 1911, 7: “Luzzatti knows that the Chamber is as aware as he is, that it only represents his plans, errands, statements and even his ideas, a demagogic expedient prompted by intentions that are totally devoid of any ideal that could be realized even in the smallest degree. Luzzatti’s logic is totally demagogic.”

55. Ibid., 104.
56. Ibid., 232ff. In 1912 in Siena, where he was a secondary school teacher, Orano had met Camille Mallarmé, granddaughter of Stéphane Mallarmé, at the time occupied writing her first novel, *Ressac* (which was soon translated into Italian, in 1914, with the title *Come si fa l’onda*). Formerly a friend of D’Annunzio, Camille Mallarmé became in 1920 Orano’s second wife and in the 1930s worked for the anti-Semitic broadsheet *Je Suis Partout*. However, she was not responsible for leading Orano toward anti-Jewish politics, in spite of the views of Matard-Bonucci, *L’Italie fasciste*, 104ff.; Paolo Orano was already an anti-Semite before meeting Camille. Regarding *Je Suis Partout*, cf. Valeria Galimi, “Intellettuali e collaborazionismo. L’itinerario di *Je suis partout* tra Maurras e Hitler,” *Passato e Presente* 49 (2000): 69–95.
61. Orano, “Per la salvezza del principio.”


66. Orano, “Per la salvezza del principio.”


68. Paolo Orano, Psicologia sociale (Bari: Laterza, 1901), 205.

69. Paolo Orano, “Nathan e il blocco,” La Lupa, March 5, 1911.

70. Ibid.


75. Orano, Nel solco della guerra, 115, 133–34.

76. “Who does not feel that he is, even a little, the product of those movements, who does not still have a little of that passion? After all, that cultural Sturm and Drang was a good thing and, furthermore, a reference point of different forces which momentarily converged” (Palmiro Togliatti, L’Ordine Nuovo, May 15, 1919, now in Palmiro Togliatti, Opere [Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1974], 27). Emilio Gentile’s last study in this field is La nostra sfida alle stelle: futuristi in politica (Rome: Laterza, 2009), 17ff.; but see above all Luciano Cafagna, C’era una volta (Venice: Marsilio, 1994), 35ff.; and Emilio Gentile, Il mito dello Stato nuovo (Rome and Bari: Laterza, 1982).

77. Cf. Paolo Orano, “Israele italiana e la guerra,” Il Giornale d’Italia, March 10, 1918; Benito Mussolini’s article was published in Il Popolo d’Italia, July 4, 1919, now in Benito Mussolini, Opera Scelta (Milan: Hoepli, 1939), 104. Paolo Orano (L. Razza) is also the likely author of the apologia of Proudhon, “Pier Giuseppe Proudhon e il comunismo,” which appeared in Pagine Libere, March 15, 1920, 56–58.


80. Ibid., 9, 11. It is striking how Mussolini, in 1932, took up the key arguments from Paolo Orano’s writings from the period of 1902–1914. Mussolini acknowledges fascism’s syndicalistic and belligerent origins and correlates them with the anti-political agitation of the Giolittian period. And his style is reminiscent of Orano’s when he expresses his disdain for democracy as “a social condition in which a degenerate horde would only be concerned with delighting in the ignoble pleasures of the vulgar man” (15).


83. Ibid., 51ff.


86. Ibid., 84.

87. Ibid., 115. Orano even argued with fascist Jewish leaders, such as Ettore Ovazza and his newspaper *La nostra bandiera*, who had failed in their attempt to gain control of the Union of Jewish Communities, taking advantage of the measures of centralization and normalization passed by the regime; the opposition of the majority of Jewish communities to Ovazza was interpreted as proof of the unreliability of the Jews (cf. Pini, *Filo diretto con Palazzo Venezia*, 167). De Michelis, *Il manoscritto inesistente*, 224n84, mentions a copy of the book by Ettore Ovazza, *Sionismo bifronte* (1935) dedicated to Paolo Orano. During the war Ovazza died in a Nazi massacre: see Sarfatti, *Gli ebrei in Italia*, 1662. See above all Alexander Stille, *Uno su mille. Cinque famiglie ebraiche durante il fascismo* (Milan: Mondadori, 1991).


91. Alfredo Romanini, Ebrei, Cristianesimo, Fascismo (Empoli: Arti grafiche dei Comuni, 1936), 16–19. On the traditionalist Catholic positions, see Monsignor Giovanni Cazzani, bishop of Cremona: Unità cristiana e giudaismo. Pastorale per la Quaresima 1939 (Cremona: Tipografia Buona Stampa, 1939), 21; on Roberto Farinacci’s agreement with such views, see his lecture “La Chiesa e gli ebrei,” given by him on November 7, 1937, on the occasion of the annual inauguration of the National Fascist Cultural Institute (Rome: Tipografia Tevere, 1938), 1–16.


93. Orano, Gli ebrei in Italia, 123.


95. See the results of the research on the Tuscan situation coordinated by Enzo Collotti, Razza e fascismo. La persecuzione contro gli ebrei in Toscana (1938–1944), vol. 1, part 2 of Stampa regionale e pubblicità razzista di fronte alla questione ebraica (Florence: Regione Toscana and Carocci Editore, 1999), 225–433, with the studies on La Nazione of Florence, Il Telegrafo and Sentinella Fascista of Livorno, Il Bargello of Florence, and Il Ferruccio of Pistoia.

96. This thesis has been maintained, as is known, by De Felice, Lo Stato totalitario, and by Michaelis, Mussolini e la questione ebraica, 118.

97. The so-called manifesto of the racist scientists was published with the title “Il fascismo e i problemi della razza,” Il Giornale d’Italia, July 15, 1938, 1. Having fallen into disgrace, Landra was defended by Giovanni Preziosi, but Giuseppe Bottai and Giacomo Acerbo got their way; see Matard-Bonucci, L’Italie fasciste, 296. Regarding Acerbo’s position, see his I fondamenti della dottrina fascista della razza, 95–96 (but also De Francisci, Civiltà romana). On this point, see David Bidussa, “I caratteri ‘propri’ dell’antisemitismo italiano,” in La menzogna della razza, ed. Centro Furio Iesi (Bologna: Biblioteca Comunale dell’Archiginnasio, 1994), 113–24.

98. De Felice, Lo Stato totalitario, 279ff. See the letter in which Guido Landra recapitulated his own undertaking after his removal: Landra to Benito Mussolini,


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4. Friedländer, Den Holocaust beschreiben, 63–65, 68.
5. Ibid., 67–68, 72.
7. Ernst Robert Curtius, Deutscher Geist in Gefahr (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1932), 9.


14. Bloch, *L'étrange défaite*, 27–28. See also *Lettres de Marc Bloch à Alice Bloch*, in particular the letters dated 31 August 1939 and 14 September 1939 in the Collection Étienne Bloch, The Hague, quoted in Fink, *Marc Bloch*, 207. In Bloch’s correspondence in 1939 and 1940 one already finds the themes that would be developed in *L'étrange défaite*: see, for example, the attack on Prime Minister Daladier after the occupation of Poland: Lettre de Marc Bloch à Étienne Bloch, 22 October 1939 (Collection Étienne Bloch, quoted in Fink, *Marc Bloch*, 208) and Lettre de Marc Bloch à Lucien Febvre, 15 October 1939 (Archives Nationales, MI 318 I, quoted in Fink, *Marc Bloch*, 211). The accusations against the army were also anticipated in the lettre de Marc Bloch à Ferdinand Lot, 3 November 1939 (Archive de l’Institut Charles Lot, quoted Fink, *Marc Bloch*, 213) and then taken up again in *L'étrange défaite*, 29–30, 126–38. Bloch’s judgment has been reproposed by William L. Shirer, *The Collapse of the Third Republic: An Inquiry Into the Fall of France in 1940* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1969), 312ff.


16. Both expressed some reservations about Benda’s method of working: “After all, it is our fault, the fault of historians, if everyone ignores so radically the little we do—if someone like Valéry, or Benda, who in fact are not so ill-informed,


20. Julien Benda, *La trahison des clercs* (Paris: Grasset, 1927), 10–11, 65. Regarding this passage, see the observations of Antoine Compagnon, *Les antimodernes: de Joseph de Maistre à Roland Barthes* (Paris: Gallimard, 2005), 311n4. According to Bobbio, the master of the irrationalists had been Bergson: “The success [of Bergson’s philosophy] depend[ed] on the fact that it laid down the primacy of the feminine over the masculine, of the musical over the plastic, of stuttering over speech, of the formless over the formed; and therefore it present[ed] itself as the philosophy of all the troubled, the grim, the souls in torment, associating the
mystics (Péguy) with the extollers of violence (Sorel)” (Norberto Bobbio, “Julien Benda,” *Il Ponte* [August–September 1956]: 1,380).


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27. See Benedetto Croce, *Saggio sullo Hegel* (Bari: Laterza, 1913), 47; and Croce, *L’Italia dal 1914 al 1918. Pagine sulla Guerra* (Bari: Laterza, 1919). Regarding these works, see Norberto Bobbio, “Benedetto Croce e il liberalismo,” in Norberto Bobbio, *Politica e cultura* (Turin: Einaudi, 1955), 227–36. Croce’s review of Thomas Mann, *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen* (Berlin: Fischer, 1918) appeared in *La Critica* 18 (1920): 182–83. As early as his work “Thoughts in War,” Thomas Mann had codified the contrast between *Zivilisation* and *Kultur* when he wrote that “civilization and culture not only are not the same thing, they are two contrasting things” (Mann, “Gedanken im Kriege,” *Die Neue Rundschau* [November (1914)], now in Thomas Mann, *Gesammelte Werke*, integrated ed. [Frankfurt: Fischer, 1960–1974], 13:527–45. See also his last letter to his brother Heinrich before the outbreak of the war, dated September 18, 1914: Thomas Mann and Heinrich Mann, *Briefwechsel 1900–1949*, ed. Hans Wysling (Frankfurt: Fischer Taschenbuch, 1995), 172. In *Betrachtungen*, Mann states: “Among the unpublished works of Nietzsche an incredibly intuitive definition of the Master Singers has been found, it is this: ‘Master singers, the opposite of civilization, the German element in contrast with the French one.’ This note is of incalculable value. In the flash of lightning of an ingenious criticism one can see the outline, for an instant, of the antithesis on which the labour of this book rests: it is the clash, so many times, out of cowardice, denied and challenged, the real, immortal clash between music and politics, between Germanness and civilization. This antagonism remains, on the part of the Germans, a fact reluctantly acknowledged, a state of mind, something which belongs to the soul, which cannot be grasped by the intellect and therefore lacking an aggressive spirit. On the part of civilization, the antagonism is political hatred; and how could it be otherwise? Civilization is thoroughly political, it is politics itself, and its hatred can be, in fact it has to be only and immediately political. The political spirit, inasmuch as it is democratic Enlightenment and human civilization is not German” (Thomas Mann, *Reflections of a Nonpolitical Man*, trans. and intro. Walter D. Morris [New York: Frederick Ungar, 1983]), 48ff.).

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an interpretation of anti-Jewish anticapitalism


42. Regarding the concept of the counter-Enlightenment, see Isaiah Berlin, Against the Current: Essays in the History of Ideas (London: Pimlico, 1997).


47. See Franziska Augstein’s reflections in Hannah Arendt. Ihr Denken veränderte die Welt, ed. Martin Wiebel (Munich: Piper, 2013), xivff.


51. François Joseph Antoine de Hell, Observations d’un Alsacien sur l’affaire présente des juifs d’Alsace (Frankfurt, 1779).


Friedrich Hartmann, *Untersuchung ob die bürgerliche Freiheit den Juden zu gestatten sie* (Berlin: Hesse, 1783), 12–17.


As David Sorkin has written, “any study of the German Jewish culture is willy-nilly a study of Moses Mendelssohn” (*The Transformation of German Jewry* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987], 8).


63. Grégoire, Essai sur la régénération physique, morale et politique des juifs, 29, 72, 144–46.


72. The references to Bonald were rare. See, for example, Drögens Tama, “Geschichtliche Darstellung des Zustandes der Juden in Frankreich in den letzten Zeiten,” in Gesammelte Actenstücke und öffentliche Verhandlungen über die Verbesserung der Juden in Frankreich, ed. Alexander Bran (Hamburg, 1807), 324ff.


74. The text of the edict of the National Assembly is in Bernhard Blumenkrantz and Albert Soboul, Les juifs et la Révolution Française (Paris: Franco-Judaica, 1989), 10. Instead, the texts of Napoleon’s edict are collected in Organisation Civile et Religieuse des Israélites de France et du Royaume d’Italie décrété par sa Majesté Impériale et Roi le 17 Mars 1808; suivie de la Collection des Actes de l’Assemblée des Israélites, de France et du Royaume d’Italie, convoquée à Paris en 1806; et de celle des Procès Verbaux et Décisions du Grand-Sanhédrin convoqué en 1807, lesquelles ont servi de base à cette Organisation (Paris: Treuttel et Würtz, 1808). The text of the decree of March 17, 1808, states in articles 7 and 8, pages 13–14: “Art. 7. As for now, at the date of July 1, no Jew could practice commerce or transaction without receiving au authorization by the prefect of the department, which will be granted based on precise information and a certificate, first by the Municipal Council (which certifies that this Jew has not practiced usury or illegal transaction) and second by the concistorium of the synagogue of the city of residence, which testifies to his good behavior and honesty. Art. 8. This authorization will be renewed annually.”


80. Ibid., 241.

81. Ibid., 201–06.

82. Ibid., 203.


96. Ibid., xxxii, xxxvi, xxxiv.


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4. Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, Assimilation and Racial Anti-Semitism: The Iberian and the German Models (New York: Leo Baeck Institute, 1982).


17. Part of these reflections was proposed by me in the seminar Storia, verità e diritto (History, truth, and the law), organized by the Central Committee of the journal *Studi Storici* the Società Italiana per lo Studio della Storia Contemporanea (the Italian Society for the Study of Contemporary History), held in Rome on April 4, 2008. The seminar proceedings were published in *Contemporanea* 12, no. 1 (January 2009): 105–56, ed. Emmanuel Bella and Raffaele Romanelli. Also: Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *Les assassins de la mémoire* (Paris: La Découverte, 1987), 4ff.


27. Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem, 268.

28. Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism, 391. The definition of the “Lager” or concentration camp as a “concentration camp universe” goes back to David Rousset, Univers concentrationnaire (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1945), but as early as 1946, Eugen Kogon examined the concentration camp mechanism in Der SS-Staat. Das System der Deutschen Konzentrationslager (Frankfurt: Europäische Verlaganstalt, 1946).


40. Ernst Nolte, *Der Europäische Bürgerkrieg 1917–1945. Nationalsozialismus und Bolschewismus* (Frankfurt: Verlag Ullstein; Berlin: Propyläen Verlag, 1987), maintains that the final solution of the Jewish question was a necessary imitation of the Soviet terror.


43. Alberto Banti, *La nazione del Risorgimento. Parentela, santità e onore alle origini dell’Italia unita* (Turin: Einaudi, 2000), 3–55; regarding the text and the author’s subsequent research, see my “La carne, la morte, la nazione,” *Passato e Presente* 69
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Alberto Cavaglion has lucidly pointed out that, when speaking about the history of propaganda and persecution (in an Italian context), there is an exclusive reference to 1938 and the racial laws, and that event is placed “on a pedestal of words, as if the history of the hatred against the Jews had begun and finished up there, on the monument of indignation” (Alberto Cavaglion, Ebrei senza saperlo [Naples: L’Ancora del Mediterraneo, 2002], 48–49). See also Integrazione e identità. L’esperienza ebraica in Germania e in Italia dall’Illuminismo al Fascismo, ed. Mario Toscano (Milan: Angeli, 1998), 152–66. Regarding the particular problem of the sudden discovery of Zionism as a reply to the trauma of the persecution, see Giorgio Voghera, Quaderno d’Israele (1967; Pordenone: Studio Tesi, 1986); and David Bidussa, “La nostalgia del futuro,” introduction to Enzo Sereni and Emilio Sereni, Politica e Utopia. Lettere 1926–1943 (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 2000).


See, for example, the eye-witness accounts collected in Una gioventù offesa. Ebrei genovesi ricordano, ed. Chiara Bricarelli (Florence: Giuntina, 1995), 43ff.


Satta, De profundis, 56.


53. Satta, *De profundis*, 123ff.


56. An incisive observation has been made by Carlo Saletti, *La voce dei sommersi* (Venice: Marsilio, 1999), 59ff.


58. On these points, see Pierre Nora, “Entre mémoire et histoire,” in *La République*, vol. 1 of *Les lieux de mémoire* (Paris: Gallimard, 1984–92), xv–xxv; and Nora,

59. Martin Broszat and Saul Friedländer, “A Controversy About the Historicization of National Socialism,” New German Critique 44 (Spring–Summer 1988): 85ff. The subject has also been dealt with by Arno J. Mayer, “Memory and History: On the Poverty of Remembering and Forgetting the Judeocide,” Radical History Review 56 (Spring 1993): 16–18. (I would like to thank Anna Rossi-Doria for having called my attention to these two texts).


61. See “The Architectural Language of Daniel Libeskind,” in Stories of an Exhibition. Two Millennia of German Jewish History (Berlin: Stift ung Jüdisches Museum Berlin, 2001), 178. (The axis of continuity, which leads from the entrance of the museum to the spacious area of the permanent exhibition, constitutes the trunk from which spring the broken branches of the Diaspora and the Shoah).


5. The Shoah, Social Anti-Semitism, and Its Aftermath


5. THE SHOAH, SOCIAL ANTI-SEMITISM, AND ITS AFTERMATH


78. Vasiliy Grossman, Life and Fate (New York: New York Review of Books, 2006);
this passage has recently been referred to by Gad Lerner, *Scintille. Una storia di anime vagabonde* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 2009), 116–17.


5. THE SHOAH, SOCIAL ANTI-SEMITISM, AND ITS AFTERMATH


100. Regarding the pogrom of 1941, see Gross, *Neighbors*, 67ff.; regarding the postwar pogroms, see Gross, *Fear*, 82ff.


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