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THE CRUCIFIED JEW

TWENTY CENTURIES OF
CHRISTIAN ANTI-SEMITISM

Dan Cohn-Sherbok



Fount

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The Crucified Jew

Believing in their own moral superiority, they held faith to the test. The Jews were the only people who refused to bow before the Cross. In response, Christians rolled these foreigners living in their midst. Even such enlightened individuals as Moses Mendelssohn were subject to discrimination. Remarking that he preferred to stay at home rather than venture out into the streets, Mendelssohn stated:

Everywhere in this so-called tolerant country I live so constricted, hemmed in on all sides by true intolerance that for the sake of my children I must abridge myself on the whole day in self-agony. A lame of child asks, "what does that fellow have against us? Why do people throw stones after us? What have we done to them?" "Yes, father dear," another says, "they chase after us in the streets and abuse us; Jews! Jews! Is it then such a reproach in people's eyes, to be a Jew? And how does that hamper other people? Oh! Close my eyes and sigh to myself: Me! Me! How have you come to this!"

During this period the very word "Jew" was invested with emotive intensity – it evoked hatred and disgust. Thus although an increasingly large number of gentle defenders of Jewish rights appeared in these centuries, popular Christian anti-Semitism remained a powerful force in society. The Christian age-old conception of the Jew as a demonic and evil force animated Christian consciousness and evoked considerable resistance to proposals for the acceptance of Jewry as equal citizens in the modern world.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Enlightenment in England, France and Germany

Under the banner of the Enlightenment, English free-thinkers sought to ameliorate the condition of the Jews. Such attempts, however, were countered by other writers who attacked Jewry on grounds consonant with the spirit of a rationalist and scientific age. In France, protestants and deists by the Enlightenment attempted to refute charges against the Jewish people. Despite such progressive attitudes, they were unable to free themselves from hatred. In addition, many of the major thinkers of the age encouraged Judeophobia. In Germany an attempt was made to present Jews in a more positive light, but here as well the rise of national self-confidence provoked antipathy toward the Jewish population. Such philosophers as Kant, Fichte and Hegel wrote disparagingly of both Jews and Judaism. In order to escape such hostility, a number of enlightened Jews – primarily in Berlin – dissociated themselves from the Jewish way of life, and others sought to gain acceptance by becoming a new Jewish-Christian Protestant sect.

English Free Thinkers

The English Civil War and the rise of the commercial middle class resulted in economic and cultural expansion. Most English thinkers of the eighteenth century supported traditional Christian doctrine, yet some writers sought to reconcile the Christian faith with the new scientific spirit. Religion, they argued, must be rational and natural. John Toland, for example, issued a formal indictment of the Fathers of the Church whom he accused of corrupting true Christianity. The original form of the faith, he insisted, was that which was practised by the Ephorites (whom he referred to as the Nazarenes or simply as Jews):

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The true Christianity of the Jews was over-borne and destroyed by the more numerous Gentiles who, not enduring the reasonableness and simplicity of the same, turned themselves by signs and ceremonies into a more sublime and sublime religion. The Jews, however, by their own actions, have shown the service doctrines and distinctions of their Philosophers, an insupportable political hierarchy, and even the altar, offerings, the sacred rites and ceremonies of their Priests, tho they would not so much as tolerate those of the Jews.

Such philo-Semitic attitudes led Toland to advocate Jewish immigration to the British Isles. In 1710 he published *Christianity as Old as Creation*, in which he criticized the xenophobia of those who resisted their entry. "The vulgar, I confess," he wrote, "are seldom pleased in any country with the coming in of foreigners among 'em: which proceeds, first, from their ignorance, that at the beginning they were such themselves; secondly, from their grudging at more persons sharing the same trades and businesses with them, which they call taking the bread out of their mouths; and thirdly, from their being debilitated to this aversion by the artifice of those who design any change in the government."

Toland's liberalism, however, was unrepresentative of Christian free-thinkers of the period. Rather, those who were critical of traditional Christian teaching blamed the Jews for the errors of the Church. The English philosopher John Locke, for example, was critical of the biblical chronology and astrological time. Unable to achieve this result, he ascribed mathematical inconsistencies in his researches to the malevolent intentions of Jewish scribes. In a work entitled *Essay Towards Rectifying the True Text of the Old Testament* published in 1722, he charged that "The Jews, about the Beginning of the Second Century of the Gospel greatly alter'd and corrupted their Hebrew and Greek copies of the Old Testament; and that, in many places, on purpose, out of Opposition to Christianity." Again, in *Christianity as Old as Creation, or the Gospel, a Replication of the Religion of Nature*, Matthew Tindal argued that Christianity is the natural religion which Moses had perverted.

Another writer of the period, Thomas Morgan, defended Gnosticism as consistent with the teaching of Christ and ridiculed the idea that the Jews are God's chosen people.

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To imagine that a Company of poor, contemptible Egyptian Slaves, who having been delivered from one Yoke of Preshood, were now to be put under another, a People scarce known in the rest of the world, to be the Corner of the Earth, that such a People, under such Circumstances, were intended in the divine Counsel and Wisdom, as a Light to the Gentiles, and the Means of preserving and keeping up the true Knowledge and Worship of God in the World, and of the true Religion or Way to Salvation, this, surely, is supposing what we speak with scorn, and that God was as much surprised at this End, and took as wrong Measures to obtain it, as Moses himself.

Another figure who attacked the Jewish people was the pastor Woodson, who maintained that the world was full of sinking Jews. Drawing on medieval tradition, he wrote:

... and the World, according to the Proverb, and common belief of Mankind, may be said to sink with them. Hence Ammiatus Marcellinus very aptly to the purpose before us, speaking of the Jews, calls them "sinking and sinking Jews." In the same manner, the Jews are first sinking, and then sink the World, from day to day, and the proceeds from them, according to the common Opinion, or otherwise: it is all one to the Prophetic and Type of them, and if their Bodies neither do, or even did sink living. Yet their blasphemies against Christ, their Maledictions of this Church, and false Glosses on Scripture, are enough to make their very Name odious and abominable.

Such attacks were grounded in the traditional conception of the Jew as a source of spiritual pollution. Though critical of traditional Christianity, these English polemicists targeted Jews as corrupters of the pure faith, enticed by the language of conventional anti-Jewish sentiment, they kept alive the Christian anti-Semitic attitudes which they infused with contemporary notions consonant with the scientific age.

The French Protestant Reaction

In eighteenth-century France, the general opinion concerning the Jews was reflected in sentiments expressed by Mme de Sévigné who

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declared "This hatred felt for them [the Jews] is extraordinary. But from where does this hatred which confounds all perfumes come? It is probably that unbelieved and ingratitude smells bad as virtue smells good. . . . I feel pity and horror for them, and I pray God with the Church that he remove from their eyes the veil which prevents them from seeing that Jesus Christ has come." None the less, despite prevailing views, an increasing number of individuals sought to ameliorate the position of the Jewish population under the influence of the Enlightenment.

Among French Protestants in particular such aspirations were pronounced, since they themselves had suffered indignities as a minority living in Catholic country. The Calvinist Jeanne Bagnat, for example, intended to write a history of the Jewish people beginning with the destruction of the second Temple – “an aim was to provide a factual historical narrative.” We are reporting accurately and faithfully everything we have been able to ascertain with regard to the text, he wrote. “The Christian ought not to find it strange that we very often condemn the Jews from various times; they are not guilty of, since justice demands it, and to accuse of injustice and violence those who have pursued justice is only to show bias.”

Barnage's aim was to refute numerous falsifications that had been levelled against Jews and Judaism, despite the fact that he believed that God had rejected them because they had crucified Christ. Even though they merited God's anger, to his mind the punishment they had endured through the centuries was excessive:

If the punishment had fastened on the heads of the guilty, it would not be surprising; but it has passed from generation to generation, from century to century. Seventeen hundred years of wretchedness and captivity have already flowed by, with no prospect of relief . . . this uniformitarian man can find almost nowhere on the whole earth where it can lay its head or set its feet. It passes through torrents of blood which it has shed, and does not perish.

This positive evaluation of *levy* was found among other Protestant writers of the time. In their theological reflections they rejected the previous denigration of *Jews* and *Judaism*. The Marquis Jean-Baptiste d'Argens, for example, was of Catholic origin, but under the influence of two Protestant publicist pastors he attacked the established

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Churches and praised the Jewish faith for approximating to the true natural religion. In one of his *Lettres juives* he wrote:

Everyone who is called a free-thinker here (in China), fashionably or people-society lingo, only practices the religion of Nazareth externally; very few of them are really convinced at the bottom of their hearts. They are satisfied to believe in God, so even think that the souls of men, many others, like the people, shroud under a metaphysics, as for the former class, I do not know if we can carry them the title of free. They believe in God who created the Universe, who rewards the good, and punishes the bad. What more do we believe? Is not this the whole of our religion except for a few ceremonies that our scholars and priests have prescribed for us?

Yet despite this conception,² Argens endorsed the traditional Christian idea that God had punished the Jews for their crimes. In another of his *Lettres*, he portrays an ex-rabbi who admits the ritual crimes of the Jews and endorses other allegations made against them. Discussing on their guilt, this ex-rabbi states:

When I think of the one our father suffered, I am tempted to believe that they were guilty of some great crimes, knowledge of which has not come down to us; and I must confess to you that, if I was not so confident as I am of the truth of my religion, when I examine the life which have overwhelmed us since the birth of Nazareth, I would find it easy to believe that the prophecies had been fulfilled and that the God of Israel had abandoned his people, and chosen another. Is it possible . . . that the Almighty should expose a people to such great trials if they did not deserve them because of crimes which required such severe punishment?

Thus although such enlightened Protestant writers as d'Ayngens and Banargès attempted to defend Judaism from traditional Christian vilification, they were unable to free themselves from Christian prejudice: their portrayal of Jews and Judaism was tinged by implicit assumptions about Jewish guilt and divine retribution.

The Jews and the French Enlightenment

During this period a number of French thinkers influenced by the Enlightenment championed tolerance and understanding and advocated

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a more benevolent attitude toward the Jewish people. Thus in *L'Esprit des lois*, Montesquieu viewed Christian intolerance as the source of Jewish ills and the cause of their peculiar practices. According to Montesquieu, Jews should be treated as Christians want others to treat them, as a Jew declares in Montesquieu's "A Most Humble Remonstrance to the Inquisitors of Spain and Portugal": "We conjure you, not by the mighty God whom both you and we serve, but by that Christ who you tell us, took upon him a human form, to propose himself for our example, to follow his footsteps, to be like him, to be crucified like himself would behave was he upon earth." Such a view of Jewry is a reflection of the new spirit that had flourished in France since the death of Louis XIV.

Other writers of the Enlightenment, however, encouraged Jewish hatred, and their works mirror ancient and medieval Christian vilifications of Jews and Judaism. In his *Projetum de Foi*, Voltaire, for example, contrasted his conception of God with the Jewish view found in the Hebrew Scriptures and denigrated the Jewish people:

The morals of theists are of necessity pure, since they always have the God of justice and purity before them, the God who does not descend to take a pleasure in seeing his creatures in pain, who does not permit them to take a pleasure in seeing their fellow creatures in pain, who does not permit a woman. Also one does not see us selling our wives like Abraham. We do not get drunk like Noah, and our sons do not insult the respectable member which gave them birth.

Again, in his *Dictionnaire Philosophique*, Voltaire included thirty articles which attacked Jews who are described as "our masters and our enemies . . . whom we detest", and "the most abominable people in the world". The Jews are, he wrote, "an ignorant and barbarous people, who for a long time have combined the most sordid greed with the most detestable superstition and the most invincible hatred for all the people who separate them and enervate them." Although Christians are guilty as well: "The only difference is that the Jews themselves are burned by layers, and that your priests have always sacrificed human victims with their sacred hands."

Similar attitudes are reflected in the writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. In his works, he pleaded for tolerance for the beleaguered

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Jewish nation and expressed admiration for Moses. Yet, like Voltaire, he was horrified by the biblical conception of the deity:

"If then it (the Divinity) teaches us what is honest and unresolvable, if it inspires us with feelings of aversion for our fellows and terror for ourselves, if it paints us a God, angry, jealous, vengeful, partial, hating men, a God of war and battles, ever ready to strike and to destroy, ever spreading of punishment and torment, boasting even of the punishment of the innocent, my heart would not be drawn towards this terrible God."

At times he also speaks of the Jew in conventional Christian anti-Semitic terms: "the vilest of peoples", "the baseness of (this people), his impurity, his very crime". Those who are critical to Diderot's *Encyclopédie* were also frequently contemptuous of Judaism. The article on Hebrew (language) for example, implicitly denigrates the Jewish people for their blindness: "It is not for us, blind mortals, no question of Jews for their let us not ask it why it pleased it only to speak to the Jews in parables why it has given them eyes so that they do not see, and ears so that they do not hear, and why of all the nations of antiquity it chose particularly the one whose head was hardest and coarsest." In an article dealing with medicine, Chevalier de Jaucourt raged against the Jews in the name of science: "The ancient Hebrews, stupid, superstitious, separated from other peoples, unversed in the study of physics, incapable of resorting to natural causes, attributed all their diseases to magic . . . in a word, their ignorance of medicine caused them to turn to sorcerers, magicians, enchanters or finally to popes." Another criticism of Jewish superstition was made by Nicholas Boulanger:

The monarch, with the abstruse Jew and with all the other nations, was regarded less as a father and a God of justice and benevolence, and more as an angel. The motive behind theocracy would therefore have been the same. This was also true of despotism . . . The true God of the Hebrews was also obliged, because of their character, perpetually to threaten them . . . The Jewish superstition which flattered that it could not permit the terrible name of Jehovah, which was also the great name of its monarch, was transmitted to us one of the conventions of this primitive theocracy.

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Pastor Polier de Rennes, a disciple of Voltaire, added to this contempt. In an attack on the Messiah, he castigated the Jews for blaspheming against the Christ: "If the Jews disputed Jesus Christ's role of Messiah and divinity, they have also neglected nothing to make him appear contemptible, to cast on his birth, his life and his death, all the ridicule and all the opprobrium that their cruel redentlessness against this divine Saviour and his heavenly doctrine could imagine."

Other writers in the eighteenth century published anti-clerical polemics which echoed such Judeophobic sentiments. *La Mésade* by Nicholas Fréret, for example concludes with a curse on Moses and the Jewish nation: "Die, Moses, die, destructive tyrant", he proclaims. "Let the Heavens crush you with thunderbolts of vengeance, and the earth, as angry as the Heavens with you, open up a horrible abyss and crush you beneath your guilty feet, and may you, abominable monster, and you, raging fanatics, vile, coarse men, worthy slaves of the tyrant, go back to your books and keep away from me!" A contemporary of Fréret, Jean-Baptiste de Mairéau, argued that the disrepute into which the Jewish nation had fallen preceded the curse of Christ:

You will therefore see from this that, a long time before they had brought down upon themselves this curse, which is now regarded as the cause of their wretchedness, they were generally hated and generally despised in every country which bore witness to their existence. . . . That is to say, they were despised in the old books except in connection with this concept, and in relation to the general aversion felt for them.

Thus, although France in the Enlightenment championed liberty and tolerance, many of the illustrious figures of this period were unable to free themselves from Judeophobia. Their advocacy of reason and anti-clericalism was accompanied by a parallel denigration of the Jewish faith and the Jews.

Stirrings in Germany

In Germany the new spirit of the age took form too. German Protestant pastors in particular propagated ideas of sectarian intolerance and anti-clericalism was accompanied by a parallel denigration of the Jewish faith and the Jews.

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advocates of the Enlightenment a special case was made for tolerance of the Jews. Such attitudes were promoted by descendants of court Jews such as Aaron Salomon Gumpertz, a member of the Berlin Gumpertz dynasty, who asked the writer Goethe for permission "to come and graze under your wings, to suck the sweet milk of the sciences . . . its you whom we Germans have to thank for so varied intellectual writings."

Prominent among those writers who sought to assimilate Jews into German society was the playwright Lessing, whose *Die Juden* depicts the noble character of a Jewish traveller who saves a Baron and his daughter (the Friedlins) from robbers. In gratitude the Baron offers him his daughter's hand. Unable to accept, the traveller declares:

Traveller: I am a Jew
Baron: A Jew! What cruel mischance . . .

Traveller: A Jew! What difference does that make?

Baron: What difference does that make?

Traveller: Shush, Friedlins, I'll tell you the difference afterwards.

Baron: So there are cases when Heaven itself prevents us from

Traveller: Being grateful to you because you wish to be

Baron: I wish to be ungrateful because you wish to be

Traveller: But I wish to do at least as much as fate allows me. Take

Baron: all my fortune. I would rather be poor and grateful than

Traveller: rich and ungrateful.

Baron: This offer is in vain for the God of my fathers has given

Traveller: me more than I need. As sole reward I ask is that in

Baron: future you should be my people's friend and ally. I will

Traveller: atone for I did myself from you because I am

Baron: ashamed of my religion. No! But I saw that you looked

Traveller: favourably on me but unfavourably on my people. And a

Baron: man's friendship, be he what he will, has always been

Traveller: inestimable to me.

During this period other dramatists also presented Jews in a positive light, and the Jew became a symbol of the struggle against prejudice. In reaction, some writers depicted these claims. Jews, they believed, were incapable of attaining noble qualities. Thus, the theologian Johann Christian Lestzinger replied that in fact there were such individuals, and he published a letter from the philosopher Moses Mendelssohn to demonstrate this point:

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Is the independence of Michaelis justified? It is not enough for the human need. And what standard do we affirm? How standard for us that we must suffer the torments of the crucified savior? The Christians have for us, and must this judgment be justified by a standard? Let them continue to express us, let them allow us to be in subjective attitudes and happy citizens, let us be exposed to the secret and contempt of the whole world, but do not let them try to challenge the threatened . . . in order for unhappy souls, they are not with more frequently among general Christians. Think of the unenviable nature that they have of mind. You cannot quote a single example of a Jew (except for professional historians) having killed a man. How early may a worthy Christian will kill a man a simple sin. How say this is because of cowardice among the Jews. So let it if cowardice spurs human blood, then cowardice is a virtue.

In the course of this discussion the Swiss Pastor Lavater called on Meisselshausen to refute Christian doctrine or, if unable to do so, convert to Christianity. Although he did not issue a public reply, Meisselshausen commented the views privately to the Duke of Brunswick. His reason, he explained, prevented him from accepting the mysteries of Christianity. Lavater's challenge was met by the publication of Meisselshausen's *persönliche*, in which he argued for a secular state in which the political and juridical rights of the Churches were abolished (as well as the judicial autonomy of Jewish communities). In

With the threat of Moses Mendelssohn, the era of self-tolerance for the Jewish population ended. The revival of national self-consciousness of aroused centerable Christian anti-Semitism, and a number of German philosophers of the period were disproportionately of the Jewish people. Following the lead of such rationalist theologians as Immanuel Kant, Immanuel Kant declared that Judaism is not a religion. Instead, he asserted, it is "merely a union of a number of people who, since they belonged to a particular social, formed themselves into a community, not into a church." Describing the Jews as "Palestinians," he inveighed against their existence:

The Palestinians living amongst us are, since their exile, because of their
usurious spirit not unjustifiably removed for their deceitfulness, so far as

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the great majority is concerned. It does indeed seem disconcerting to conceive of a nation of insurers, but it is just as disconcerting to conceive of a nation of pure mechanicians, by far the largest part of which is bound together by a superstition recognized by the state in which they live and do not seek any civic honour. But they try to compensate for this lack by the advantages of outwitting the people amongst whom they find shelter and even by deceiving each other.

Kant's unseipen Fichte advocated the expulsion of the Jews as the only means of protecting the German nation. "To protect ourselves against them," he wrote, "I see no other way than to conquer for them their promised land and see them all there . . . But to give them civic rights—I see no means to do that except, one night, to cut off all their heads and give them new ones in which there would not be one Jewish idea." Echoing such animosity, Hegel added his invective against the Jewish

which was to come two centuries later.

The Berlin Haskalah

Berlin at the end of the nineteenth century contained a number of rich Jews who built large homes which they entertained Prussian society. These individuals, who had assimilated into Western culture, were highly critical of Orthodoxy. Adopting the principles of the Enlightenment, they sought to reform the mass of Jews, a number of Jews who moved in these circles wrote disparagingly of the stultifying atmosphere of traditional Jewish life. The philosopher Solomon Maimon, for example, denigrated the oppressive atmosphere of Polish Jewry to which he had descended as a youth. In his *Autobiography* he wrote:

My life in Poland from my marriage to my emigration, which embraced the springtime of my existence, was a series of miseries with a lack of all

facilities for the promotion of culture, and consequently an aimless application of my powers . . . The general constitution of Poland at the

facilities for the promotion of culture, and consequently an aimless application of my powers. . . . The general constitution of Poland at these times, the condition of our people in it, who, like the poor as with their double burden, are oppressed by their own ignorance and religious prejudices, as well as by the ignorance and prejudices of the ruling classes, the misfortunes of my own family—all these combined to hinder the course of my development and to check my natural disposition.

To remedy this situation, reformers advocated a revision of educational training in accordance with the principles of reason. Only in this way, they believed, would Jews be able to recognize the absurdity of Jewish beliefs and practices. To this end such modernism as the Kantian Benedict ran a school for Jews in this world was conducted in Germany. Other figures of this period celebrated the Jewish contribution to the Enlightenment. Thus Moses Hensel declared:

Thanks to our philosophical century, the age of barbarism has passed away, when one must expect a contemptuous grimace at the mention of the word Jew . . . The man who is capable and worthy, whatever his faith and religious opinions, can henceforth lay claim to the affection and respect of those who think differently . . . The Christian and the Jew can love each other with a brotherly love, esteem each other, and honour each other.

Although most of these de-judaised Jews retained some vestige of their ancestral faith, others converted to Christianity. Among Moses Mendelssohn's descendants, his youngest son converted to Protestantism, and Abraham, the father of the composer Felix Mendelssohn, had his children converted. His brother-in-law, Bartholdy, was convinced that this was the right course of action.

Do you think you have done something wrong in giving your children that religion which you think the better for them? It is a real tribute which you and we all are paying to your father's efforts for true enlightenment in general, and he would have acted like you have done for your children, perhaps as I have done, for my part. One can remain faithful to an oppressed, persecuted religion, one can force it on one's children in expectation of a life-long martyrdom – so long as one

believes it to be the only religion that can save you. But if one no longer believes this, then it is barbarous.

believes it to be the only religion that can save you. But if one no longer believes this, then it is barbarous.

[illegible][illegible]

During this period a number of Jews sought to transcend their Jewishness through collective conversion, yet unlike other Christian converts they wished to form a new Judeo-Christian sect. In 1799,

under the leadership of David Friedländer (a follower of Mendelssohn), a group of the heads of enlightened Jewish families declared their willingness to submit to baptism as long as they were not obligated to accept traditional Christian dogma. "If the religion of the Protestants prescribes certain ceremonies," they stated, "then we can well submit ourselves to these as pure forms which are demanded for entry into a society, it being well understood that these ceremonies are only external and as such, as customs, to demonstrate that the member admitted is accepted as a member of the society, and not that he accepts in faith the dogmas of the church of this society."

This request was addressed to Pastor Wilhelm Teller of the Lutheran Consistory in Berlin, who responded that he would grant baptism, but only if certain conditions were fulfilled: "To be Christian you must at least accept the sacraments of baptism and communion and acknowledge the historical truth that Christ is the founder of the most sublime moral religion. It is possible to grant you freedom of religious opinions, which moreover differ with the Church itself, but not as far as the dogmas are concerned." Once this Jewish appeal was made public, numerous Christian objections were raised. The theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher, for example, charged the Jewish petitioners with hypocritical motives. He stated that these individuals were motivated solely by material concerns. Thus they hoped to gain the Enlightenment which many Christians to see the improvement of the German Jews, undercurrents of Christian anti-Semitism flowed just beneath the surface of public life.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Emancipation of the Jews

At the end of the eighteenth century the spirit of the Enlightenment stimulated Christian Europe to seek the amelioration of Jewish life. With the establishment of the Napoleonic era, Jewish existence was revolutionized. The summoning of a Great Sanhedrin in France paved the way for Jewish emancipation, and the position of Jewry improved throughout the continent. In the midst of such social upheaval, German Jewish reformers such as Israel Jacobson attempted to adapt Jewish worship to modern conditions. To the consternation of the Orthodox, Reform temples appeared throughout Germany. Yet ironically, many enlightened Jews influenced by the Romantic movement were uninterested in what Reform Judaism represented. Instead of providing a new basis for Jewish life, they merely hoped to avoid intensified Christian animosity to the Jewish way of life. In Russia, the aim of emancipation was to bring about the assimilation of the Jewish population—the programme of the Tsars was driven by centuries-old Christian hostility to the Jews. From the Jewish side, responses to these moves throughout Europe to improve the plight of Jewry were mixed: traditionalists tended to fear that such steps would undermine Torah Judaism, whereas progressives enthusiastically welcomed new freedoms and opportunities. The gentle reaction was equally ambivalent. Although liberals ardently campaigned for equal rights, many Christians feared the consequences of such agitation, and at the end of the second decade of the nineteenth century outbursts against the Jewish population spread from country to country.

The French Experience

In the wake of the Enlightenment, the emancipation of the Jews began to take place at the end of the eighteenth century. From western

With the publication of *Oper und Drama*, Wagner continued his diatribe against the Jews: "As a Jew, he owned no mother tongue, no speech against his people, no speech among the sinews of his innermost being. He was with precisely the same interest in any modern tongue you chose, and set it to music with no more concern for its idiosyncrasies than the mere question of how far it was ready to be a pliant servant to Absolute Music."

For Wagner, hatred of the Jews became a driving obsession. In 1853, Liszt described to Princess Witzgenstein Wagner's passionate contempt: "He flung his arms round my neck, then he rolled on the ground, cursing his dog Pegg, and talking nonsense to himself. When he sprang on the Jews, who are a people of the most unchangeable type in a very broad sense." Twenty years later the Christian League's Hermann presented a more detailed picture of Wagner's hostility:

His hatreds at the unutterable misery wrought by the Jews against our people culminated in the description of the fate of the German peasant who would soon no longer own a square inch of his own soil . . . I have never seen him exhibit such a flare-up of holy wrath, after his last words, quite beside himself, he flung himself on to me and bit my nose, and only returned after an interval, when the paragon had died down.

Throughout Wagner's life, virulent anti-Semitism was a constant theme; thus in 1881 he warned the King of Bavaria about the threat of a Jewish nation: "I regard the Jewish race as the born enemy of pure humanity and everything that is noble in it; it is certain that we Germans will go under before them, and perhaps I am the last German who knows how to stand up as an art-loving man against the Judasism that is already getting control of everything." Such ardent Judeophobia was a modern manifestation of ancient Christian attitudes to the Jews. Conceived in racist terms, it eventually fueled the passion of the Nazis which sought to solve the Jewish problem by means of the gas chambers.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Modern Images of the Jew in Germany, France and Russia

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, the Jewish community suffered further outbreaks of Christian anti-Semitism. In Germany, numerous racist publications denigrated the Jewish people, leading to the creation of political parties which propagated anti-Jewish attitudes. At the same time, German school children were encouraged to undermine the traditional Jewish belief in the universality of Scripture. Similar anti-Jewish attitudes were expressed in France such writers as Chevalier Gougenot des Mousseaux, Edouard Drumont, and Jules Soury denounced both Judaism and the Jewish nation. Such hostility provided the background to the Dreyfus Affair which erupted at the end of the century. Falsely accused of treason, Alfred Dreyfus was sentenced to life imprisonment, but subsequently exonerated. The hatred engendered by his trial led a number of Jews to question whether Jewry could ever be secure without its own land. Inspired by the vision of a Jewish homeland, Theodor Herzl embarked on a vigorous campaign to convince world leaders of the necessity of anti-Jewish state. Only in this way, he believed, could the problem of anti-Semitism be solved. During the period of the Dreyfus Affair, Jewry also experienced widespread persecution and hatred in the form of 1880. Profoundly affected by such massacres, many Jews emigrated to distant lands; others sought to ameliorate their condition through revolutionary struggle. Aware of such agitation, the Russian authorities became increasingly alarmed. Such concern was intensified by the publication of *The Secret of Judaism* and the fraudulent *Pseudeals of the Elders of Zion*, which alleged that the Jewish people conspired against society to achieve world domination. The revival of the ritual murder charge at the beginning of the next century further inflamed Russian antipathy toward the Jews.

German Anti-Semitic Campaigns

The second half of the nineteenth century witnessed the manifestation of Christian anti-Semitic agitation throughout Germany and Austria. In 1871 *The Jew of the Talmud* was published by Canon August Rohling, a Professor at the Imperial University of Prague.¹ This work, based on *Judaism Unmasked* by Johann Andreas Eschenmayer, revved the Christian myth of ritual murder. The twelve ritual murder trials of Jews in German regions held between 1867 and 1914 were largely due to Rohling's influence.

Another major figure of this period was Wilhelm Mann, who is credited with coining the term "Anti-Semitism" in his *History of Judaism since Christianity*. Mann argued that Judaism had been victorious in the modern world. "The Jews [do] not deserve any reproach," he wrote. "They have struggled for 1800 years against the world and have triumphed." Mann's argument was that the Jews had been so successful that they had become a threat to the Christian world. Mann's argument was that the Jews had been so successful that they had become a threat to the Christian world. Mann's argument was that the Jews had been so successful that they had become a threat to the Christian world.

in 1907, the Communist Party was founded on the Christian Socialist Workers' Party which promulgated anti-Semitism as a central policy. In consequence violence erupted in Berlin in 1880-81. Mob attacks against Jews in the streets, drove them from cafés, and smashed their store windows; in the provinces synagogues were burned. At the same time, Bernhard Förster, Nietzsche's brother-in-law, who had visited Wagner's Bayreuth, organized a petition which called for a census of the Jews in Germany and their exclusion from the teaching profession. Over 200,000 signatures were obtained.

Through the influence of the historian Heinrich Iretschke, anti-Semitism gained considerable respectability, and anti-Semitic movements and parties became increasingly common. International conferences were held, and various fraternities refused to admit Jews.

students, indeed, the German section of the student debt was reduced to *fast*. Numerous anti-semitic treatises also began to circulate in the end of the century, such as *Die Jüdische als Kaiser-Sitten- und Kulturfrage* and *Der Kampf der Religion durch Volkswirtschaft und die Ausbeutung der Jüdischen durch den modernen Volkstempel* by Karl Eugen Dittmar. All these works were eventually retranslated by the *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century* by Anglo-German writer, Houston Stewart Chamberlain. In his study Chamberlain illustrated that the anquity and mobility of the Jewish nation thwarted the confrontation between superior Aryan and pariahs Semites. On the parry, Karl Eugen's last lecture of the Austrian Christian party, publicly exposed anti-semitic policies in 1887 without the encouragement of Pope Leo XIII and Cardinal Rampoll. Eventually he was elected mayor of Vienna. In Germany the *Antisemitische Volkstempel* was four times in 1890; three years later its number in the Reichstag increased to sixteen.

[illegible]

Anti-Semitism". Thus on the threshold of the twentieth century, Jews and Judaism were heeaged on all sides as they had been through centuries of Christian discrimination and persecution.

The Crucified Jew

Before Dreyfus

After the Revolution of 1789, French Jewry was accused of conspiring against Western society – to defend their co-religionists everywhere. *Israélite Universelle* was established in 1860, co-edited by two converts in Paris. Yet despite such allegations, from 1860, 1878, 1898, under the pontificate of Pius IX, French Catholics, and even converts, adopted a relatively moderate policy toward Jewish emigration. None the less, during this period Christian anti-Semitism continued to fester, as evidenced by the publication of *Le Juif, le rabinisme et la judaïsation des peuples chrétiens* by Chrélier Congout des Mousseaux. This tract (which received the blessing of Pius IX) collected anti-Jewish charges concerning the Talmud and rabbinic sources, the activities of the *Alliance Israélite Universelle*, and a plot allegedly conceived in Italy by the Jewish Mason Piccolo Tigre.

According to Congout, Jews continually conspire against Christians and encourage revolution in consequence with their presentiments. "This savage code (the Talmud) which combines the precepts of hatred and plunder with the science of cabalistic magic, which professes high magic, is the cause of the Jewish race." That is why the Jews will remain unseparable beings. "The Talmud is destroyed." In the light of such a being, Congout argued that "the Middle Ages had the good sense to isolate in restricted quarters and to compel (Jews) to wear a special attire that allowed everyone to avoid them. When one was forced to deal with this scum it was hidden like a disgrace for which one sought all possible purification. Shame, and the danger of contact, had been the Christian antidote to their pestilence since God wanted to perpetuate this vermin."

From 1880 to 1881, this theme of a Jewish conspiracy was promulgated by the Catholic review *La France juive*, which published the work of Caliste de Calate. According to this author, the Jews themselves were responsible for the Russian pogroms of this period since they were ever pursuing from time immemorial, and by every means, the idea of ruling the earth". This contention was based on the

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writings of the Russian convert, Jacob Braflman, and the forgery, *The Rabbi's Speech* taken from a novel by Hermann Goedsche. In 1882, *La revue des questions historiques* stated that: "Judaism rules the world, and we must therefore conclude either that the Masons have become Jewish or that the Jews have become Masons." Such an allegation was based on the Jewish League Against the Christians (Ligue Juive Contre les Chrétiens) which began in 1880. During this period, such violent anti-Semitic campaigns in 1880. During this period, such hostility was intensified by the Catholic Eugène Bonny, founder of the bank Union Générale, who blamed the bankruptcy of the bank on the intrigues of the Rothschilds. This charge was widely believed and became the subject of numerous literary works. The 1880s also witnessed the proliferation of a wide range of anti-Semitic publications such as the periodicals *L'antiquité* in Paris, in 1881, and *L'antisémitisme* in Moudier in 1883.

In 1886, Edouard Drumont's *La France juive* denounced the Rothschilds as well as other prominent Jewish figures, and thereby fostered further manifestations of Christian anti-Semitism. In the first page of this work he linked the Revolution with the Jews: "The only page of this book which has remained in the Revolution with the Jews." The only page of this book which has remained in the Revolution with the Jews." Everything came from the Jew. Everything returns to the Jew." Attributing what he saw as the Judaization of France to Jewish emancipation, he contrasted the scheming character of the Semite with the chivalrous nature of the Aryan: "Semite, mercantile, greedy, scheming, devout and the Aryan, enthusiastic, heroic, chivalrous, disinterested, frank, trusting to the point of naivety. The Semite is earthbound... the Aryan is a son of heaven... The Semite sells glasses or grinds lenses like Spinoza, but he does not discover stars in the immensity of heaven."

As a consequence of such racist propaganda, a number of official Catholic publications became openly anti-Semitic, and the Jewish problem became a major concern of nationalist journalists. In 1890 *Le Courrier* declared that it was "the most anti-Semitic newspaper in France". Philosophical works as well denounced Jewry as an inferior race. According to the materialist philosopher Jules Soury:

The product fertilized in the egg of an Aryan or a Semite will reproduce the biological characteristics of the race or the species, body and spirit, as surely as the embryo, the foetus, the young or the adult of any other mammal. Race a Jew in an Aryan family from birth, and neither the

nationality nor the language will modify one atom of the genes of the Jew, and consequently, of the hereditary structure and texture of his tissues and organs.

nationality nor the language will modify one atom of the genes of the Jew, and consequently, of the hereditary structure and texture of his tissues and organs.

Such attitudes permeated French society and fuelled the passions inflamed by the Dreyfus Affair which attracted world-wide attention at the end of the century.

In the last decades of the nineteenth century a relatively large number of French Jewish men had embarked on a military career: more than 10,000. And 10,000 were members of the officer corps.

In the last decades of the nineteenth century a relatively large number of French Jewish men had embarked on a military career: more than 10,000. And 10,000 were members of the officer corps.

three months, 1995, to the end of the investigation and interest – this situation served as such an example for the Dreyfus affair which erupted in the 1890s.

In 1891 Alfred Dreyfus became a captain on the General Staff. Two years later a secret memo sent by a French officer to Colonel von Schwartzkopfen (the military attaché of the German embassy in Paris) came to the attention of the French intelligence Service. On the occasion of an examination of the handwriting, the head of the Service, General Sauter, including Major Hilg, identified the handwriting as that of the French officer. Dreyfus was found guilty and sentenced to life before a court. On 5 January 1895, he was deported in a public military train to the Devil's Island in the French Guiana.

After the sentence, he proclaimed his innocence. Incited by the anti-Semitic press, the outlanders fanned against Dreyfus and the Jewish community. Subsequently Dreyfus was exiled to Devil's Island in French Guiana, off the coast of South America.

In desperation Dreyfus finally enlisted the writer Bernard Lazare, who sought to overturn the verdict. In 1896, Lazare, who was also a socialist, published a pamphlet, *The Verdammte des Dreyfus*, and sent copies to prominent people and other public figures. The same year the intelligence minister, Ferdinand Wailly Sazdovitch, had written an intelligence report on the Dreyfus case. On the basis of the evidence the new head of the French intelligence Service, Lieutenant-colonel Georges Picquart, concluded that the original letter incriminating Dreyfus dated in fact been written by Sazdovitch. Major Henry Fergat forged further documents to demonstrate that Dreyfus could

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However before departing, Biquard communicated the facts of the case to friends who passed on the information to August Schuster-Kasner, who declared in the *Shema* that Dr. Heyd was "a Jew, a Jew, a Jew" and that he had been "killed by a Jew." The next day, on 15 May 1904, the *Shema* published an article by Dr. S. Mitter, in which he stated that, in addition to the case, he knew a *saat* other Jew. Subsequently Heyd was tried and acquitted, and Biquard was punished with six days' imprisonment. Nonetheless, on 13 January 1898, the newspaper *Le Journal* published an open letter by Emilie Zola to the President of the Republic entitled *J'accuse* in which he denounced those who had denounced Dr. Heyd. Heyd was charged with libel. Zola was, however, eventually found guilty of defamation, and officers of the General Staff threatened to resign if Dr. Heyd was acquitted.

Throughout the country, anti-Semitic outbursts took place, and the Dr. Heyd affair became a public issue. In the summer of 1898 a new law was passed, known as the *Loi sur la presse*, which was aimed at the minister, Camille, decided to reappoint the case. Henry's original case was dismissed, and he was arrested. Later he was released, but he was discredited, and he was never able to recover his reputation and a certain amount of respectability.

During the second half of the century, the anti-Jews repeated their original testimony, and in 9 December 1899 the court-martial decided that Dr. Heyd had committed treason, sentencing him only to the further years of imprisonment because of extenuating circumstances. Although Dr. Heyd was eventually granted a pardon by the President of the Republic, he demanded a fresh investigation in 1904. After re-examining the case, the court of appeal decreed that the evidence against him was unsubstantiated and that it was thus unnecessary to arrest a further trial.

The Dr. Heyd affair had produced a profound effect on Jewish life, and in particular on the thought of Theodor Herzl. The Paris correspondence of the *Neuwa Yiddishe Presse*, on 5 January 1898, had announced the history of the case. Herzl was so shocked by the case that he decided that there was no way any Semite could be eliminated; the only solution for the Jewish people was to create a land, a territory of their own. In the same year, he completed the first draft of his *Der Judenstaat*. This work was initially addressed to the Rothschilds – Herzl was convinced that their capital could only be redeployed by the establishment of a Jewish state. "There exists only one solution," he wrote. "We are talking about a simple old idea – the exodus from Egypt."

Subsequently Herzl revised the work for the general public; his central thesis was that the Jewish problem cannot be solved by assimilation because of the persistence of anti-Semitism. Jews are inevitably marginalised in the marketplace of commerce: "In vain are we loyal patriots, not joyed in the nationalities running to extremes; in vain do we strive to increase the fame of our native land in science and art, or her wealth by trade and commerce; in countries where we have lived for centuries we are still cried down as strangers." Only the creation of a Jewish state could relieve Jewry of such an insecure existence.

In 1897 the first Zionist congress took place in Basle, which called for a national home for Jews based on international law. At this congress Herzl stated that the emancipation of the Jews had been an illusion: Jews were everywhere objects of contempt and hatred. The only remedy to the Jewish problem, he argued, was the establishment of a homeland in Palestine. In the same year the Zionist movement began to spread with branches in Europe and America. After embarking on diplomatic negotiations, in 1898 he met with Kaiser Wilhelm II, who promised he would take up the matter with the Sultan. When nothing came of this, Herzl attempted to arrange an interview, and a meeting with the Sultan took place in 1901. This was followed by meetings with Joseph Chamberlain, the British Secretary of State for Colonial Affairs.

After a trip to the Pale of Settlement in 1903, where he encountered poverty and deprivation, Herzl reluctantly agreed to Chamberlain's proposal for a Jewish state in Uganda as a place of temporary refuge. At the next Zionist conference in Basel, the proposal was rejected. The next year Herzl's health deteriorated and he died. The Zionist movement, which Herzl had founded, continued to exist. The next few days the Zionist movement was threatened by schism, at the end of the proceedings the Russian Jews set off for Kharkov where they convened their own conference committing themselves to the idea of Palestine. In England, public opinion was opposed to the transference of Uganda to the Jews, and the offer was eventually withdrawn. In the following year Herzl died, and the Zionist movement was led by a new President (David Wolffsohn) who attempted to heal the rifts between competing factions. At the 1907 congress a resolution was

passed which pledged the movement to the quest for a charter, the physical settlement of Jews, and the revival of the Hebrew language. Theodor Herzl's death and his aftermath highlighted the position of modern Jewry. After 1800 years of persecution in Christian lands, many Jews came to see their salvation in terms of social and political isolation.

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Russian Protest

After the annexation of the major part of Poland at the end of the eighteenth century, Russian authorities turned their attention to the charge of ritual murder. Although Derzhavits's investigation had revealed that Jewish law does not prescribe such a practice, the Danzig Affair of 1840 had revived Christian fears. Thus the Tsar assigned officials to conduct a new investigation. In a report published in 1844, the folklorist Vladimir Dal recorded that although ritual murder was represented by the vast majority of Jews, it did not exist among the Hasidim. Subsequently trials for ritual murder occasionally occurred, as for example in Kuysy in 1879. At the same time the former Polish priest Hippolytus Lutostanski published a work on this subject which he sent to the future Tsar Alexander III, and the Russian daily *Venoge Pravya* printed a study of ritual murder in the Ukraine by Nikolai Kostomarov.

The latter half of the nineteenth century also witnessed counter-emancipatory tendencies among Russian writers. In the 1860s the Slavonic theoretician Ivan Aksakov protested against Jewish emancipation. "The real question", he stated, "is not the emancipation of the Jews, but the liberation of the Russians of the south of Russia from the Jewish yoke." Later the convert (Jew) published a series of articles on the Oniboda. Stepanovskiy Akimov published a series of articles on the Jewish people, which were collected in two volumes. In the *Book of the Kaddish*, Berthman sought to illustrate the procedures by which Jews excluded other religious groups from trade and industry.

We learn that each Christian landowner is sold by the *kaddish* (Jewish community) to a Jew. Yes, sold like an investment, both in his person and in his property. It is not just a way of speaking, but a legal term because the transaction is sealed by a special sales contract, similarly

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villages, whole sections with their inhabitants are bought and sold. Under the cover of our eastern and southern borders, the Jews are kept in the same conditions, they are over and subjects to the jurisdiction of the Jews not only the Jews but also the Russians, without their knowledge.

In *Local and Universal Jewish Brotherhoods*, Brafman further explained the nature of Jewish communal organization: "The brotherhoods are the major arteries of Jewish society . . . They link all the Jews scattered over the globe into one powerful and invincible body."

For many Russian Jews, including the intelligentsia, the Jewish presence became increasingly problematic. Thus in the summer of 1899 the writer Fedor Dostoevski, who was undergoing his yearly cure for emphysema in Bad Ems, complained in a letter to Polyakovskaya, the poet and friend of his, that he was tired of Jews. Polyakovskaya, in reply, wrote that "if anything is completely foreign," he said, it was "it's unbearable. It is supposed to last five weeks. And not this. Literally half are Yids. On my way through Berlin I also noticed that Germany, or at least Berlin, has become Juddized." In response Polyakovskaya asserted that the Jews had become a threatening force in Russia as well. "What you write about the Yids is perfectly correct. They have invaded everything . . . They are at the root of the Social Democratic movement and terrorism. They control the press and the stock market. They reduce the masses to financial slavery. They formulate the principles of contemporary science, which tends to dissociate itself from Christianity . . . And nobody dares say that here the Jews control everything." In the same year *Novoye Vremya* published caricatures from White Russia in which the Jews were depicted as "Germans"; this was followed in 1880 by the publication of *The Yids on the March*.

Given such a climate of Judeophobia it is not surprising that when Alexander II was assassinated, Jews were suspected of plotting his death. As a consequence a pogrom took place during the Holy Week of 1881 in Elizavetgrad, followed by others in Kiev, Odessa and elsewhere. These events were described by Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, a French expert on Russian affairs:

Anti-Jewish riots took place on a set day, almost everywhere in accordance with the same procedure, not to say the same programme.

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They began with the arrival by mail of a range of weeklies. Often, on the day of the week, the papers had been lying accusing the Jews of nihilism and the murder of Emperor Alexander II. To arouse the masses, the agitators read in the streets or cabarets articles from anti-Semitic newspapers. . . . the rumour spread that the Tsar had granted three days to pillage Jewish property. In many localities the negligence of the police and the indifference of the officials . . . helped to confirm this legend.

In May 1881 the Tsar assured the Jewish community that he would protect them from further violence, yet he regarded Jewish exploitation of the masses as the cause of these disturbances. In the following year the Tsar issued a series of decrees to protect Christians from such abuse: the Pale of Settlement was decreased in size and Jews were forbidden to settle in the countryside as well as in certain cities. In 1884 General Drenth (Governor-General of the south-western region) closed the vocational school in Zhitomir, giving as his reason the privileged position of the Jewish populace: "In view of the fact that in the cities and localities of the south-west the Jews constitute the greatest group of artisans and, consequently, prevent the development of crafts among the native populations exploited by them, a vocational school for which there is no Christian exploitation of the native hands . . . an obstacle to the development of the native population." Outside the Pale where a number of Jews had managed to settle during the reign of Alexander II, police raids were aimed to reduce their numbers. In defence of this policy Alexander II is said to a high official: "We must never forget that the Jews crucified Christ and shed his precious blood."

Revolution and Ritual Murder

The pogroms which took place at the end of the nineteenth century produced a profound change in Jewish consciousness. Beginning in 1881, Jews petitioned the government to legalize emigration, and articles and letters were published in Jewish periodicals protesting against this new wave of anti-Semitism. A typical example stated: "When I think how we were treated, how we were taught to love Russia and Russian letters, how we were manoeuvred into introducing the

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Russian language into our homes, so that now our children know to other, and how nowadays we are hunted and persecuted, my heart is filled with the most corrosive despair."

At this time a number of young Jews formed a Zionist organization, *Lovers of Zion (Hovev Tzion)*, and some of its members settled in Palestine. Other Jews sought refuge elsewhere, primarily in the United States. Alarmed by such mass immigration, the US government commissioned an official report on the plight of Russian Jews. The conclusion of this document is so bluntly and so strongly recommended that a formal protest be made about Jewish persecution:

Considering the fact that restrictive measures against the Jews in Russia affect from five to seven million individuals, who are therefore forced to emigrate, and who, for various reasons (mostly individual and religious freedom) choose our country, we have devoted more time to the study of Jewish emigration than any other. . . . Russian emigration is a consequence of all past policies, and it is not possible to turn it down by an imperial decree or an official order to stop the persecutions.

Yet despite such disapproval of Russian policies, the plight of Jewry grew worse.

Although for many Russian Jews emigration served as the solution to their problems, many young Jews became partisans in the revolutionary struggle. In his *Der Antisemitismus in Russland*, Ivan Tolstoy described these young revolutionaries:

Jewish young people who, after graduating from high school have been able to obtain a university education but are barred from it through administrative prohibitions, enter practical life deeply frustrated, full of resentment and hatred against authorities who deprive them of their rights. It is these embittered groups who organize and swell the ranks of the revolutionary parties, and the universities barricaded against their influx, are helpless against their propaganda.

As a result of such agitation, Nicholas II came to identify Jews with revolutionary propaganda. During this period Russian hostility toward the Jews was intensified by the traces which propagated the myth of a Jewish world conspiracy. After the coronation of Nicholas II in 1895, *The Secret of Judaism* appeared in the files of the police, alleging that in ancient times the

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doctrine of monothelism was known by a small number of Egyptians who refused to enlighten the masses. Yet Moses transgressed this ban and passed on such teaching to the Hebrews in order to give them an exalted position among the nations. Later, when Christ sought to impart divine knowledge to humanity, the Jews crucified him and were thereby punished. This was the origin of the Jewish plot against humanity.

The only method within human limitations that seemed capable of changing the tragic fate of the Jews, punished by God, was to hasten as much as possible the spiritual evolution of the rest of mankind. This premise implies two types of activities:

- (a) Creative: to contribute to the rapid spread of Christianity throughout the world.
- (b) Destructive: to undermine at all cost the ethical foundation of Christianity among the believers.

This is the programme that became the cornerstone of the whole subsequent history of the Jewish people. . . . How can we help admiring a people that was able to subordinate all its thoughts, passions, embassies, and even every routine detail of its life to a unique plan?

Ten years later, when the situation appeared to justify the dire prediction contained in this anti-Semitic tract, the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* made its appearance. This forgery was written at the end of the nineteenth century by an unknown author working for the Russian secret police. Adapted from an old French political pamphlet by Maurice Joly (which ascribed ambitions of world domination to Napoleon III), it alleged that the leaders of world Jewry controlled the policies of various European states. The aim of this Jewish body was to achieve world power by reducing the gentiles to slavery. The purpose of both these works was to enlighten Russian society to the evil influence of Jewry and their leading role in the Revolutionary movement.

The ancient Christian accusation of ritual murder accompanied such charges. On 20 March 1911 the body of a thirteen-year-old boy, Andrei Lashchinsky, was discovered in the suburbs of Kiev. After the anti-Semitic press accused the Jews of this murder, an inquest was initiated. Eventually Mendel Beilis, a foreman in a brickyard near where the body was found, was accused of the crime. However the

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editor of the newspaper *Kieślone Mięso* embarked on his own investigation and tracked down the true culprits – a gang of thieves who killed the child because they feared he would act as a witness against them. In September a trial took place. During the proceedings Father Płanyszt, a Catholic priest who had published a pamphlet on ritual murder, reiterated the medieval legend of the punishment of the Jewish people and its remedy:

The few people who were by Moses, who said: "God will strike you with all the plagues of Egypt!" It is clear that this case was accomplished since all European Jews have exorcism on their forebears, all Asiatic Jews exorcise on their heads, all African Jews hold on their legs, and American Jews find a cure for these diseases. They use the perverse rabbis have found a cure for these diseases. They and the afflicted parts with Christian blood. When Jesus kill Christians, they referred to a triple name. First, they said the hatred they bear Christians, and they believe that this magical is therefore pleasing God Second, it allows them to perform magical acts. Thirdly, since the rabbis are not sure that the son of Mary and the Messiah, they believe that by sprinkling themselves with Christian blood they may find salvation.

Although Beilis was later acquitted of this crime, the trial appeared to substantiate the charge of ritual murder. Thus the Tsar proclaimed: "Undoubtedly, there has been a ritual murder, but I am happy that Beilis was acquitted, since he is innocent."

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Prelude to the Holocaust

[illegible]

Prelude to the Holocaust

consider themselves men-

reality they do not live this event as their own destiny, but they side with it, judge it as interested bystanders, and the ultimate meaning of the struggle must for this very reason remain incomprehensible to them . . . The belief in the inseparability of the mutual misdeeds and wrongs leads

During the last days of World War I the assembly at Weimar drafted a new constitution which transformed Germany into a federal republic. Immediately this new regime faced opposition from the extreme right and left. During 1922-3 there was massive inflation, but for the next five years there was greater stability as well as important intellectual and cultural developments. This period of prosperity was followed by the Great Depression – over six million were unemployed between

granted considerable support.¹⁰ To cope with this crisis, the government began to take up presidential duties. After several influential conservative coalitions, Field-Marshal Paul von Hindenburg appointed Adolf Hitler as Chancellor of Germany on 30 January 1933.

According to Hitler, the Jews are parasites and degenerates. Germany's belated history has suffered from them because they have not been able to contribute to the nation's progress. The Jewish problem was part of a world-wide Jewish race. Such a vision of anti-Jewish sentiment and anti-communism provided a justification for the belief that the Germans were entitled to greater living space in eastern Europe: the Jews had taken control over the Slavs and therefore the struggle against communism (defined as Jewish Bolshevism) was synonymous with the attack on 'yourself, *yourself*'. Hitler saw himself as the victor of an heroic battle against a malignant part of Europe – an Aryan identity would provide Germany with control of an empire which might rightly deserve. In the 1920s Hitler's party was a minor force in the Reichstag. In November 1933 the Nazis attempted a coup in Munich.

which failed, but the Depression gained Hitler the support of several sections of society: German industrialists who feared communism; those who were insecure about their social positions; and boisterous youth. In 1928 the Nazis achieved 810,000 votes; in 1930 they had 6,380,000; and 14,000,000 in 1932. On 5 March 1933 the Nazis won

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44 per cent of the vote. These events were the prelude to catastrophe for European Jewry.

Russian Hostility

At the beginning of World War I, many Russian Jews proclaimed their allegiance to the Fatherland. Hence, in 1914, the Jewish Deputy Pridemian declared to the Duma: "I am a Jew, but I am a Russian. I believe in God, and I believe in the Fatherland. I have always felt like citizens of Russia, and we are faithful sons of the Fatherland. No force on earth can separate the Jews from the Fatherland, from this land to which they are bound by ancient links. The Jews are going to defend it, not only out of a sense of duty, but also because of deep affection."

Despite such protestations of loyalty, Christian anti-Semites accused Jews of espionage and collaboration with the enemy. Frequently traditional Jewish customs were misinterpreted to support allegations of treason. As one report of the period stated:

It is an old Jewish practice to keep in the synagogue of small communities a Jew in charge of the keys to the door. This Jew is called the *Shomer*. When a rope is hung from the door, everyone is allowed to carry his usual possessions on Saturday, that is to say, the day of rest. According to a convention of Jewish law, a city surrounded by a rope is considered a courtyard. The soldiers, not understanding the function of that rope, believe that its function was to telephone the enemy.

In this atmosphere of suspicion, it was not uncommon for Russian officers to insist that Jews in the Russian ranks are reflected in the Russian people. In 1915, by Lieutenant-General Zhdanovich, commander of the First Infantry Brigade. "During the present patriotic war," he wrote, "all the numerous nationalities that settled in Russia, with the exception of the Yids, have united so thoroughly that national differences have been completely forgotten. The Yids could have taken advantage of this exceptional, historical moment to restore the reputation of their people, to give proof of their human dignity, and to obtain equal rights, since they claim to be the object of unfair treatment." Yet such aspirations were not Jewish aims. Instead, he

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asserted, "Russian Yids exhausted every trick to keep from participating in the defence of the homeland. Anger and hatred will then be directed against the Jews, and in the end the Russian Yids will have to pay the price of their failure to fulfil their military obligation and popular duty. They will turn not only against those who through their criminal behaviour helped the enemy but also against their relatives and innocent children."

In their animosity to the Jewish people, the Russian authorities invoked the spectre of an international Jewish conspiracy. With the onslaught of the Revolution of 1917, pogroms broke out in provincial cities and excesses took place elsewhere. In Ekaterinodar a "Slave Group" was formed to carry out an anti-Semitic campaign in the countryside, and the Ukraine witnessed widespread anti-Jewish activity. So extensive were these hostilities that in June the regional Executive Committee emphasized the need for an anti-pogrom law. "We must not allow pogroms to continue," it stated. "It is a grossly incorrect to focus in the markets and other gathering places of the public. It is in Vitebsk and Petrograd that the calls for pogroms are the loudest. The pogromists insist that the Jews control the militia, the Soviets, and the District Dumas, and threaten to assassinate certain political figures." The Soviets themselves accused the counter-revolutionaries of blind prejudice: "This anti-Jewish militancy, often marked by radical rallying cries, constitutes an enormous danger, not only for the Jewish people, but also for the whole revolutionary movement, for it threatens to drown in blood the whole cause of the liberation of the people, and cover the revolutionary movement with an indeleble shame."

For many Russians the Jews were viewed as responsible for the revolutionary struggle. After the war, the Jews were alleged to have influenced Jewish specialists played a central role in these events. In a series of lectures said in Petrograd by the journalist Evgeny Semyonov to the American diplomat Edgar Sisson, it was claimed that the Bolsheviks were controlled by a "Rhenish-Westphalian syndicate" through the agency of the Jewish banker Max Warburg and the American Government published these documents under the title *The German-Bolshevik Conspiracy* in 1918. It was also asserted that the Tsar and his family had been murdered on the order of the Jew Jacob Sverdlov and under the direction of the Jews Yurovsk and

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The boils that shine and burrow,
The sores that slough and bleed
The leprosy of Naaman
On thee and all thy seed?
Stand up, stand up, Gehazi,
Draw close thy robe and go,
Gehazi, Judge in Israel,
A leper white as snow!

[illegible]

Similar animosity was echoed by leading figures of the day. Despite his support for a Jewish homeland, Lord Balfour complained to his mistress, Lady Elcho:

In Brighton, at the Sassoons, I met Rosebery, Devonshire, and H. Farquhar. We found out, to our profound indignation, that we had been invited under false pretences. The Prince of Wales had dedicated a hospital in the morning, at Rubens Sassoon's untimely Monday. The two evenings, we were forced to attend a long, hot and pompous dinner, crowded with innumerable Sassoon young ladies.

Prelude to the Holocaust

Although I have no prejudices against the race (far from it) I began to understand the point of view of those who are opposed to foreign immigration!

Lord Robert also remarked that the enthusiasm of Chianu Weizmann (overlooked) his native republic, even world, phylanthrop "Joseph Chamberlain commented to the Italian minister of foreign affairs, Sonnino, that he despised the Jews. "They are all physical cowards, he declared. Reporting on the events taking place in Russia, the British press accused the Jews of playing a major role in the Russian Revolution. The *Times* of 13 September 1917 put it: "The Petrograd story is an awkward composition put together by itself composed of detentions, internecine, and assassinations . . . most of the time typical international Jews, and including no soldiers or workers. A few of them are known to be in these pay of the Germans." *The Morning Post* similarly interpreted these events:

[illegible]

Such allegations led to widespread animosity, and in 1918 the *Herald* recorded various outbreaks of anti-Semitism:

Our attention has been called to the terrorism practised against the Jews and foreigners in some parts of East London. We are informed that all kinds of mean persecutions prevail, that men with long beards are insulted in the streets by their heads pulled, that shopkeepers are obliged to submit to what is nothing more nor less than organized blackmail. . . . This kind of thing is directly traceable to the free distribution of inchmen, which the police appear to be circulated, and to the venomous attacks on foreigners appearing in the yellow press.

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After the war the publication of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* provoked a storm of controversy. On 8 May 1920 the *Times* questioned its authenticity, but in terms that suggested that a secret international organization might exist: "What is this *Protocols*?" it asked. "Is it authentic? Did a gang of criminals really prepare such a project and plot over their exposition? Is it a forgery? If so, whence comes the uncanny note of prophecy, prophecy in part fulfilled, in part far gone in the way of fulfilment? Have we been struggling these tragic years to blow up and exterminate the secret German organization of world domination only to find beneath it another more dangerous because more secret? Have we, by straining every fibre of our national body, escaped a *Ras Germanus* to fall into a *Ras Judaeus*?" The *Times* also asked a very pertinent question: "If the *Protocols* are the work of a Jewish-German-Bolshevik conspiracy in defence of Jewry the *Jewish Chronicle* attempted to refute such allegations, yet the myth of a world Jewish conspiracy continued to haunt British life.

Anti-Semitism in the United States

Despite the general acceptance of the Jewish community in the United States, the European stereotype of the Jew was not unknown in the New World. As waves of immigrants penetrated into North America, discrimination against Jewry became increasingly widespread. Thus in 1896 a New Jersey hotel announced in New York newspapers that it would not admit Jews. In the following year the hotelier John Hilton refused to allow the millionaire Joseph Seligman to stay in his Saratoga resort. At the end of the century such discrimination spread to country clubs. A notable sign of this was the refusal of the country club at Long Beach, Missouri, to accept as a member a Jewish physician, and the refusal of the country club at New York to accept as a member a Jewish physician. When, for example, the librarian Melvil Dewey founded a club in New York which excluded Jews, a number of Jewish nobles addressed a letter of complaint to the State.

More than 750,000 Jews resided in this state. The majority are taxpayers who fulfil their obligations for the maintenance of state institutions and the payment of salaries of state employees, including Mr Melvil Dewey as head librarian. They are proud of this state and its administration. They strive to raise its cultural level, to facilitate education, and to

Prohibitive to the Hebrews

regulate the arts, science, and literature. They have worked for the cause of education as much as any other group of citizens in this community. They, therefore, feel they have the right to demand that a man, as a public official representing the whole population of the state, be prohibited as a state employee from showing the vile prejudices to which a man can stoop.

The Jewish community also established organizations to protect their interests, such as the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League.

In their efforts to defend the rights of American Jews, the American Jewish Committee fought successfully against attempts to limit Jewish immigration, and the Anti-Defamation League pressed the Russian government to issue entry visas to Americans of Jewish origin. In addition, the American Jewish Committee sought to ensure that Jews were fully accepted as Americans. Such an undertaking was needed to counter the views of writers such as Madison Grant who argued in *The Passing of the Great Race* that the Jews posed a serious threat to the American populace:

The old-time American is being replaced in many rural regions by foreigners, just as he is being literally chased from the streets of New York by swarms of Polish Jews. These immigrants borrow the language of the original Americans, adopt their dress, speak their language, and are accepted as Americans. They are not, however, Americans. They are a *divers* people, which will produce numerous and strange hybrids and ethnic horrors that future anthropologists will not be able to sort out.

With the American entry into World War I, Jews were viewed as participants in international conspiracy. In a report, *Bolshevism and Judaism*, which appeared in November 1918, it was alleged that the decision to overthrow the Tsar was made on 14 February 1916 in the Jewish section of New York by a revolutionary group headed by Jacob Schiff. Quoting a section of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, the report stated that the Elders were convinced that they could stop any rebellion of the "goyim". Finally the report listed thirty-one leaders – all of whom were Jews except for Lenin – who ruled Russia. The Elders were by these revelations were accompanied by a succession of Jewish leaders in the United States in 1919, including that of the German workers, most of

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whom were Jewish. In response, Citizens' Committees and Patriotic Organizations flourished.

Although the Russian revolution was heralded by a number of Americans, many others attributed the Jewish influence on the course of the revolution to the influence of the Jewish influence on the course of the revolution. Some, however, even maintained that the ringleaders of the revolution were Jews from New York. Thus in a conversation with American senators, the Rev. George A. Simons of the English Methodist Church in Russia gave evidence that the Bolshevik movement was aided by American Jews:

Mr. Simons:

We were told that hundreds of agitators who had followed Trotsky-Bronstein came from the East State of New York. They were men of great energy and of these men going up and down the country. Some of them, when they learned that I was the American minister in Petrograd, stopped me and seemed happy to find someone who spoke English. But their bad English showed that they were not real Americans. Some came to visit me. We were talking and they said they had been to the meeting of the Yiddish element in this affair, and it soon became evident that half the agitators were Yiddish.

Senator Nelson:

Hebrew? Jewish apostates. I don't want to speak of Jews as such. I am not in sympathy with them.

Mr. Simons:

Hebrew? Jewish apostates. I don't want to speak of Jews as such. I am not in sympathy with them. I hate persons of any type. But I am firmly convinced that this business is Jewish.

Senator Sherman:

Wouldn't it be remarkable if it turned out that the Bolshevik movement was born in our country, financed by Germans?

Mr. Simons:

I don't think that the Jewish movement would have been born in Russia without the help of certain New York elements, what is known as the East Side.

Such charges encouraged American patriots to defend their country from the pernicious influence of Jewry. In 1923, after a trip to the United States, Haire Belloc reported on these activities:

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Even in New York, defence organizations are just beginning (in Great Britain a screen proportion of Jews has been recently getting up to 100,000, and in the United States 100,000). The Jews are being admitted to major country clubs, and most of the time they are barred. Their talents are rarely used on the General Staff of the army. They have no real civic standing. They are excluded from I don't know how many books. As I have just stated, the major country clubs refuse to admit them. The universities, particularly Harvard, have openly organized their defence against the invasion of new Jewish students.

In literary circles writers commented on the evils of Jewish influence. Thus in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Beautiful and the Damned*, the character Anthony Patch described the Jewish impact on life in New York:

Down in a tall, busy street he read a dozen Jewish names on a line of stores. In the door of each stood a dark, little man watching the passers by with intent eyes, eyes gleaming in the darkness. He could not disassociate it now from the slow upward creep of this people. The little stores, growing, expanding, consolidating, moving, watched over with hawk's eyes and a bee's attention to detail. They shivered out on all sides.

The most vociferous critic of Jews during this period was the industrialist Henry Ford. In an interview Ford explained the origins of his views:

On the ship there were two very prominent Jews. We hadn't travelled two hundred miles (when) these Jews started telling me about the power of the Jewish race and the way they manipulated the world through their control of the gold supply. The Jews, and only the Jews, could stop the war, I refused to believe this, and I told them so. They went into details to describe how the Jews controlled, and how they owned the money.

Having uncovered this Jewish plot, he felt compelled to share such revelations with others. On 22 May 1920 the *Darwin Independent*, which Ford had purchased two years earlier, denounced the economic power of the Jewish community. Subsequently, Ford's newspaper began to quote passages of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, and an American version of the text was published in 1921. In the same year a

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protest against such slurs about the Jewish population were issued by leading American figures including Theodore Tilton, Wilson and leading Irishmen as well as Jewish and anti-Jewish sentiment drawing on previous Christian stereotypes, continued to fester beneath the surface of everyday life, poisoning the body politic of the American people.

French Judeophobia

Despite the patriotism of French Jewry during World War I, anti-Semitism persisted during the war years, as in other countries, the Russian revolution was viewed as inspired by Jewish activists. Thus in July 1917, when the Bolsheviks attempted to gain power, the Jews were accused by *La Liberté* and other right-wing newspapers of plotting the revolution. "It is impossible to understand the revolution without the great tremors that are passing through it if we neglect the Jewish factor. . . . Austro-Bosche or Prusso-German Jews will raise the flag of Israel over the ruins of the vanquished." A month before the revolution became successful, *L'Heure* passing its information on the *Morning Post* incriminated the Jews in the plot against the Tsar:

Even those who are not anti-Semitic cannot help making a small observation on the composition of the Foreigner's secret and the background of the revolution. . . . The Jew is the great factor in the history of agriculture, who is now Kerensky's bitterest opponent, is Feldman. The real name of Stokoly, the well-known author of Order Number One to the Russian army, the one that abolished discipline is Nahshkes, German Jew. . . . As for Lenin, everybody knows that his name is Zederbaum.

Once the Bolsheviks were successful, the French press blamed the Jews. As Maurice Barres noted: "Russia is disappearing because it is infected with Jew." Added to such allegations were the claims of the politician Georges Clemenceau who attacked the Jewish population for their involvement:

Without patriotism, how can there be a homeland? What is a people that no longer has a homeland? Alas, we can see it in this mob of German Jews who, unable to keep the land of their ancestors, appeared at the

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Indignation of their brothers in Germany to denounce Russia, whose first action was to strip from the superior position of all barbarians. One must not kill, for killing is not an answer. Among others, before and after him, the Nazarene proved it. It is sufficient not to be led, that is, misled, by the suggestions of a people that once was great, but now shows itself incapable of creating this homeland that its artistic concepts considered secondary, the way the fox of the fable deceived others to obtain an appendage of which it had been deprived.

In December 1918, the vilification of the Jews intensified: Jewish Bolshevism was perceived as a major threat to national stability. In addition, Zionism was seen as posing a serious danger to the Christian world. Thus in March 1919 *La Documentation catholique* stated that the Jewish "claim to universal domination does not prevent the Jews from pursuing the reconstruction of their own special kingdom." Several months later this publication listed a series of remedies for the Jewish peril:

We must create a public opinion in Christian countries. . . . We must create the morning of the Jewish people. . . . We must create the Christian nations of the Christian ideal of the absence of allowing the cradle of their religion to fall under the domination of the Jew, whether disguised or not. A second remedy . . . persuade the peasants not to sell their land to the Jew by pointing out that this land will increase in value. A third that would give mortgages . . . would be extremely helpful. Finally (it ought to say, above all), union between Christians and Muslims is required as an essential for salvation.

In May 1920 *Le Petit Parisien* reported on events taking place in Russia: "It would be easy to see the organization of the great Asiatic crusade against the British. The Jew Braunstein (sic), known as Trotsky, surrounded by his Semite or Oriental cabal, dreams of becoming the Napoleon of the East. He is the undisputed head of the immense international secret society that aspires to overthrow European civilization and expel the British from their possessions in Asia." Again, the reporter Albert Londres commented in *L'Espresso*:

The proletarians are led by the nose. Who rules, then? The activities of socialist conventions, the grimy cabals, the mobs of the world libraries,

wasting their youth on books dealing with patriotism to find ways to cope with their material needs, the Siberians, the Mongolians, the Armenians, the Asians, and in the labyrinths of hallways, in the police stations, under the wastepaper baskets, the king, the Jew, Ah! the charming little massacre that is brewing on the horizon.

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The campaign against the Jews continued in the years that followed. This is how Bogdan Deshayes, published in *Le Figaro* *l'opinion* in 1936, wrote: "The Jew is the enemy of the world, the enemy of all whom they lived." "The documents I have consulted," he wrote, "the examination of English, American and Jewish newspapers and periodicals, testimonies gathered in Egypt and Palestine, and data furnished by reliably informed correspondents on certain Jewish manoeuvres have put me in a position to follow rather closely the steps toward the creation of Jewish rule over the Anglo-Saxons." Some observers concluded that the Judeo-German conspiracy had increased its grip on power. According to André Clémentine:

The people of the Entente are caught in the formidable pinners held by the German leaders. The first branch of the international Jewish movement is the international financial activities of the Judeo-German syndicate operating on the upper strata of the countries of the Entente to recruit accomplices through corruption. The second branch is represented by the activities of the Bolsheviks or Socialists of Bolshevik leanings acting on the labouring classes of the Allied countries.

Such attitudes paved the way for the horrors that were to follow in the years of Nazi rule.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

The Death Camps

Christian anti-Semitic attitudes of the war years crystallized in Adolf Hitler's conception of the Jewish people as an evil race seeking world domination. Once the Nazis gained power, they instituted a series of anti-Jewish policies culminating in *Kristallnacht* (the Night of Broken Glass) during which Jewish property and synagogues were destroyed. This event was followed by the invasion of Poland in September 1939, where Jewish people were persecuted. The next stage of Hitler's plan of extermination took place with the invasion of Russia in 1941. Initially, mobile killing battalions began the devastation of Russian Jewry; this method of killing was supplemented by the death camps where Jews were gassed. The first gassing took place in Auschwitz-Birkenau, then at Birkenau, followed by Chełmno, Bełżec, Sobibor, Majdanek, and Treblinka. As the destruction of European Jewry progressed, resistance spread. In the Warsaw ghetto the Jewish Fighting Organization engaged in acts of sabotage; however in May 1942 this uprising was suppressed. The final stage of Nazi terror proceeded without pause: Jews continued to be transported to their deaths as World War II drew to a close. During these years of horror many Jews were killed in and without Germany, a direct result of the leadership by Jews in positions of leadership and influence. Once the war ended, the Vatican and others close to it helped a number of war criminals to escape from the Allies.

Hitler and the Jews

At the beginning of his activity in Munich in 1918, Hitler was allied with the anti-Semitic publisher Dietrich Eckart. After his death an incomplete book was produced under Eckart's name which contained Hitler's views on the Jewish problem. These ideas were developed in