One  Antisemitism, Anti-Catholicism, and Anticlericalism

In 1902, the historian and Catholic political commentator Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu (1842–1912) published the first systematic comparison between antisemitism, anticlericalism, and anti-Protestantism. ¹ Before this time, authors in Germany and France who had related antisemitism and anticlericalism to each other had done so largely through polemics: Catholic antisemites often claimed that their political positions were a reaction to Jewish anticlericalism, while Jewish critics of the Catholic Church frequently argued that they were merely defending themselves against Catholic opposition to Jewish emancipation. Although Leroy-Beaulieu's 

*Doctrines de haine* [Doctrines of Hatred] repeated these arguments, it also added what one scholar has called a structuralist explanation of these three forms of prejudice. ² According to Leroy-Beaulieu, a number of common threads connected all three discourses: Proponents of each type of hatred similarly expressed their positions in terms of economic rivalry, religious antipathy, and racial prejudice as well as in the form of fantasies about the political intrigues of their imagined enemy.

Offering a critique of interventionist secularism and “tyrannical statism,” Leroy-Beaulieu argued that all three doctrines of hatred resulted from the pressures of the modern nation-state. ³ In each case, representatives of a particular group demanded the unity of the nation, which, they claimed, was threatened by Jews, Protestants, or the Catholic clergy in turn. Yet, in Leroy-Beaulieu’s estimation, it was not a particular group but rather the ideologies of antisemitism, anticlericalism, and anti-Protestantism that ultimately divided the nation. Leroy-Beaulieu’s interpretation was unusual in his day but has since become a mainstay of the historiography on the European culture wars of the nineteenth century.
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century. Most scholars now favor the view that the nations of modern Europe were divided primarily by their most militant unifiers.

For most of the twentieth century, Leroy-Beaulieu’s *Doctrines de haine* had little influence, despite the fact that its author is considered by many to be one of the greatest fin-de-siècle intellectuals and philosemites. Indeed, already before the Dreyfus affair, in 1893, Leroy-Beaulieu had opposed antisemites by writing a passionate and sophisticated apology of the Jews in a work entitled *Israël chez les nations* [Israel among the Nations]. A Catholic liberal from the upper middle class who taught at the prestigious École libre des sciences politiques, Leroy-Beaulieu was a rare voice of dissent in a period when many saw Catholicism, monarchism, and antisemitism as complementary political commitments. Given his unusual position, many centrist republicans welcomed Leroy-Beaulieu’s intervention into the study of comparative marginalization as a noble endeavor yet soon forgot his work. Jewish activists and journals of the day also enthusiastically supported him but did so selectively: They applauded his opposition to antisemitism but ignored his arguments about anticlericalism. This disjointed reading of Leroy-Beaulieu’s oeuvre continues to inform current scholarship, even though historians interested in anti-Protestantism and the genealogy of French laïcité have recently revived his notion of doctrines of hatred. In general, the extensive scholarship on antisemitism has been less concerned with comparisons to the stigmatization and exclusion of other groups and more interested in establishing a singular narrative beginning with the history of Christian anti-Judaism. As a result, no study has picked up where Leroy-Beaulieu left off in 1902.

The dearth of comparative approaches is remarkable considering that Germany and France both gave rise to modern antisemitism and constituted focal points in the conflicts between liberals and Catholics. A vast literature on the history of antisemitism in both countries has explored how modern antisemites depicted Jews as members of an alien Oriental race whose attempts to gain wealth and social status weakened the position of their Christian neighbors. In tandem with this literature, a growing body of scholarship has pointed to the ways that liberals in the same countries portrayed Catholicism as backwards and similarly cast Jesuits as saboteurs who planned to subjugate the world and undermine the nation. While these two literatures have not developed in
isolation from each other, few works have tried to explore the parallels and entanglements between these different forms of othering. Given the striking similarities between anti-Catholicism and antisemitism, it seems worthwhile to return to the comparative approach pioneered by Leroy-Beaulieu and to ask: Were different “doctrines of hatred” in fact connected during their formative phases? In which contexts did polemics against different groups reinforce each other, and in which contexts did they depart? This chapter pursues these questions by comparing antisemitic and anti-Catholic polemics in modern Germany and France, charting the emergence of polemical secularist politics through this double lens. By suggesting ways of rethinking the relationship between the claims different actors made against Jews and the Catholic Church in modern France and Germany, this chapter also offers a logical starting point for understanding the complex position Jews inhabited within the nineteenth-century European culture wars between liberal secularists and Catholics. Jews and Catholics alike had a fraught relationship with polemics that defined what secular citizenship and modern religiosity could mean. Focusing on the intersection of debates over the place of Judaism and Catholicism in different modern European contexts thus illuminates the stakes Jews had in depicting political conflicts in terms of a clash between a secular and a Catholic camp.

Although this chapter surveys the connection between antisemitism and anti-Catholicism in one long chronological sweep, my aim is to allow us to see new details of these discourses rather than flatten what we already know. I am therefore less interested in simply comparing these two phenomena and more concerned with exploring how they became entangled, reinforced each other, and together shaped different modern visions of political belonging and progress in two European countries. Although various modern thinkers and activists remained convinced that antisemitism and anti-Catholicism were diametrically opposed to each other, my analysis shows that secularism subjected Jews and Catholics alike to increased scrutiny, albeit with different consequences. Yet, I argue that it is not the hatred but rather the intense interest in Judaism and Catholicism as alien objects of inquiry that is most characteristic of European secularism in its various forms. In this interpretation, I take a cue from the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman, who
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has referred to the depiction of Jews as radical Others—whether in the form of antisemitism or philosemitism—as “allosemitism.” What follows is thus a story not merely of resentments, as Leroy-Beaulieu would have had it. It is instead an analysis of secularism as a regime of knowledge based on both allosemitic and allo-Catholic views of Jews and Catholics as foils as well as models for thinking about which forms of religion could be considered politically acceptable. These models, much like their attendant polemics, were frequently shared by influential figures in Germany and France.

The Challenge of a Comparative History of Different Doctrines of Hatred

Before engaging with the entangled history of antisemitism and anti-Catholicism it may be useful to contemplate some of the challenges involved in undertaking comparisons between such fundamentally different forms of Othering. A history of the coevolution of these two doctrines of hatred must, first of all, take into account the different emphasis of anti-Jewish and anti-Catholic rhetoric. Depending on the context, antisemitic authors and politicians inveighed either against Jews, Judaism, or Jewish institutions. The same distinction could be made among authors who criticized Catholics, Catholicism, or the Catholic Church. To a large degree, slippage between these different targets is characteristic of the heated polemics against religious and political enemies. A pamphlet that railed against the immorality of Eastern European Jews might quickly become a condemnation of the economic power of all Jews, for example, just as a history of Jesuits might rapidly turn into a critique of Catholic superstitions or the allegedly antimodern nature of the Catholic religion. Because such polemics have such a wide range of imprecise targets, any selective grouping of texts can give the impression that Jews and Catholics were stereotyped in a similar way.

Looking at the larger corpus of texts makes clear that this was not the case. Most liberal critiques were aimed against Catholic institutions, the influence of Catholic clergy, the persistence or revival of superstitions that allowed clergy members to control their flocks, and Catholicism
as a religious culture. The targeting of whole Catholic populations was nonetheless uncommon in both Germany and France, in spite of several glaring examples of enlighteners and, later, liberals who employed Orientalist imagery to depict Catholics as insufficiently modern. Antisemites, by contrast, were primarily concerned with identifying the alien character of the Jewish population as a whole. Characterizing Jews as members of a different ethnic, racial, or national group, they argued against the political emancipation and social inclusion of Jews, an approach anti-Catholics seldom employed in their campaigns. Anti-Jewish and antisemitic activists and thinkers also rarely focused exclusively on rabbis, in contrast to anti-Catholicism’s focus on the Catholic clergy.

This different emphasis is most strikingly reflected in caricatures produced in Germany and France during the nineteenth century. While satirical magazines featured widely recognizable images of what they intended to be a Jewish type, they offered no equivalent of a recognizable typical Catholic. The accompanying two drawings from the Berlin satirical weekly Kladderadatsch illustrate this asymmetry. Both incidentally offer anticlerical messages. The first image was published during the debates on the Mortara affair of 1858, which erupted after Edgardo Mortara, a Jewish boy from Bologna—then part of the Papal States—was taken from his parents by the police following his baptism by a Catholic maid. According to the Roman authorities the boy, now a Christian, could no longer remain in the care of his Jewish family. The affair became a cause célèbre for liberals across Europe. It also occasioned a great deal of anticlerical and satirical commentary.

In the wake of the Mortara affair, many contemporaries contemplated the potentially absurd consequences of a scenario in which a person’s religion could be forever changed only because someone had sprinkled him or her with water. The first illustration offers a version of this type of humorous reflection: How could one protect oneself from baptismal water? Waterproofing, of course. The drawing shows a Jew putting on water-resistant clothing in preparation for his travels to Italy. While the illustration was intended as an anticlerical depiction, it employed standard allosemic portrayals of Jews as essentially Other. Indeed, the only stereotypical figure in the drawing is the Jew, who is central to the satirical effect of the image. His figure—unlike the Catholic—was a stock
character that could be used not only to consciously denigrate Jews but also to other ends, including anticlerical campaigns.

This contrasts with the second image, which depicts both the Catholic clergy and population in an unflattering way. To a large degree, the humor of the drawing is produced through the caption, which need not concern us here. On a visual level, the second illustration works

Figure 1.1. “Caution is the mother-in-law of wisdom. Zwickauer equips himself for a long-planned trip to Italy.” The headband and shirt say “waterproof.” *Kladderadatsch*, November 7, 1858, 208.
through a conventional depiction of the costume and physiognomy of the Catholic clergy and draws on the familiar image of priests grown fat from overindulgence. The Catholics on the right of the drawing, by contrast, are stereotypical in their demeanor and perhaps in the prevalence of devout women, but they do not appear as caricatures of a single, easily identifiable type. Indeed, outside of the context provided with the illustration, they would not be recognizable as Catholics.

This contrast in visual representation hints at the fact that Jews and Catholics faced clusters of stereotypes with different emphases and implications about the possibility of their belonging to the nation. The trope of foreignness existed for both groups, but only the pair “Jews and Germans” or “Jews and Frenchmen” became an exclusive binary, whereas the opposition between Catholics and Germans or Frenchmen appears to have been unknown. Even ardent German Protestant liberals,
who denounced Catholic beliefs and rituals as alien, rarely argued that Catholics could never be Germans. While claims of Jews’ foreignness and irreconcilable racial difference became the central accusation of modern antisemites, the primary charge hurled against Catholics was rather that they remained stuck in the past and insufficiently rational. Not surprisingly, most nationalists and liberals in nineteenth-century France and Germany alike considered it much easier to abandon irrationalism than an alien origin or character. This difference in stereotypes was particularly pronounced in France, where most inhabitants were at least nominally Catholics. In French liberal and republican polemics, the term Catholic was largely defined by political commitments rather than religious heritage. To be Catholic in France was not, as in Germany, to belong to a distinct religious community that could be ethnicized. These reflections suggest that, while certain tropes in antisemitic and anti-Catholic discourse were similar, the emphasis on themes of foreignness and progress often remained different in each case, as did the particular targets of each of these doctrines of hatred. To continuously mark these differences, I therefore resist literary convention and address the connections between anti-Catholicism and antisemitism with asymmetrical terminology: In the pages that follow, I will refer less frequently to depictions of Jews and Catholics and more often to depictions of Jews and Catholicism or Jews and the Catholic clergy.14

Another issue that raises methodological concerns is that of the differing levels of vulnerability experienced by the targets of antisemitism and anticlericalism. Whereas Jews were a small minority that did not constitute more than 0.5 percent of the population in France or 2 percent of the population in the German states, Catholics formed the majority in France and many regions of Germany. Even when Jews and Catholics were both small minorities in predominantly Protestant cities such as Berlin—where Catholics and Jews constituted just over and just under 3 percent of the population, respectively, in the mid-nineteenth century—Catholics were part of a much larger religious group in Prussia and the German states as a whole.15 This disparity is just as great if we compare the Catholic Church and the institutions of organized Jewry. French and German anticlericals targeted one of the single most influential institutions in their society, whereas antisemites largely imagined the collective power of the Jews in Europe.
Although this difference had an impact on the way Jews and Catholics lived and expressed their communal interests, it matters less if we want to understand how these two forms of Othering were connected discursively and historically. Protestant and Catholic liberals often discussed Jews and the Catholic clergy in related ways as they spoke about progress, proper religiosity, citizenship, and nationhood, despite the fact that the “real” targets of their invectives were fundamentally different.

Even if the realities of demography and power need not be central to rhetorical forms of exclusion, stereotyping often had an unequal impact on Jews and Catholics and, thus, meant something different to members of each group. Indeed one major difference separates Jewish and Catholic experiences in this regard: Jews did not retaliate against perceived injustices with riots in modern Germany or France, whereas German and French Catholics were both victims and perpetrators of mass violence at different moments during the long nineteenth century.\(^{16}\) Does this mean, however, that hatred against Jews and Catholics cannot be discussed together for methodological and ethical reasons? Pierre Birnbaum makes this argument cogently when he argues against reviving Leroy-Beaulieu’s idea of doctrines of hatred.\(^{17}\) Because there was no Protestant or Jewish violence against Catholics in France, he contends that it makes little sense to use one overarching category for anti-Protestantism, antisemitism, and French anticlericals’ critique of Catholics. Indeed, one might ask: Is the fact that both Jews and Jesuits were labeled as foreigners enough to justify treating them as equal victims, when it was only the small Jewish minority who suffered physical violence?

Without diminishing these methodological problems, a brief overview of the violence perpetrated against Jews, Catholics, and the Catholic clergy in nineteenth-century Western and Central Europe reveals that differences were not always as stark as one might assume with the history of the Holocaust in mind. Throughout the long nineteenth century, violence affected Jews, Catholics, and the Catholic clergy, even if unevenly and at different times. The most severe cases of violence against Jews occurred in 1819 in Northern and Western Germany and in Alsace during the revolutions of 1789, 1830, and 1848.\(^{18}\) All of these major incidents transpired during the first half of the long nineteenth century, a pattern which offers evidence of the increasingly rare nature
of anti-Jewish violence during the nineteenth century despite the rise of political antisemitism. Equally important, anti-Jewish violence in France and Germany became less and less lethal over the course of the nineteenth century. Even in the most notorious case of anti-Jewish violence, connected to blood libel accusations in Konitz in 1900, there was little bloodshed. In metropolitan France, the last fatalities of anti-Jewish violence in the nineteenth century likely occurred in 1832. Whatever the reason, the great wave of anti-Jewish protests of 1898 that exploded in the midst of the Dreyfus affair led to fatalities in Algeria but not in metropolitan France. As in the case of Konitz, many late nineteenth-century riots were contained by the presence of the state's security forces.

Violence against the Catholic clergy was different but also common throughout the long nineteenth century in Western and Central Europe. The French Revolution and the Commune of Paris in 1871 each brought about their own ideological persecution of priests in the name of the nation. In various other instances there was also nonstate violence against the clergy and lay Catholics. This is especially true if we include riots against Catholic foreigners or Catholics who were also linguistic minorities. Even in Catholic France, religion was present as a symbol of difference in riots against Catholic immigrants. In 1893, for example, French workers killed between eight and fifty Italian immigrants in riots in the country's south—shouting “Death to the Cristos,” and thus highlighting their victims’ perceived religiosity and their own nonreligious identity. While this does not necessarily suggest that riots were caused by religious motives or the victims’ religious affiliation, the killing of individuals identified as “Cristos” cannot be disconnected from anticlerical rhetoric. Attacks against Catholic clergy and churches were also a form of political protest in France in the 1830s.

While this type of political violence was uncommon in Germany, some scholars have highlighted cases of riots that emerged from tensions between different denominational groups. The most famous—if also exceptional—case of such violence against a Catholic institution was the storming of Berlin’s Moabit monastery in 1869 by a mob of 3,000 to 10,000 people. All of this should not obscure the fact that Jews—a smaller and more vulnerable minority in both countries—experienced violence in
fundamentally different ways than did Catholics or Catholic clergy for most of the nineteenth century. Because both groups were threatened physically, however, it is worth asking whether similar patterns led from insult to violence. In both cases we might ask whether longue durée hatreds or local circumstances have more explanatory power. While the following discussion focuses less on social realities and more on the depiction of Jews and Catholics in high- and middlebrow texts, this brief survey of the history of violence against these two communities in modern Germany and France indicates that—as long as we do not equate the two—there exist compelling reasons to pursue comparative and integrated analyses of modern antisemitism and anti-Catholicism in the social realm as well.

Jews and Catholics as Symbols during the Enlightenment

The Reformation marks a convenient starting point for any search for the prehistory of the entanglement between debates on Jews and Catholics in modern secularist discourse. While the Reformation did not necessarily make Jewish life in Europe any easier than it had been previously, it certainly made it more interesting as a subject of inquiry to Protestants in particular. Representatives of all confessional parties—Lutherans, Calvinists, and adherents of the Tridentine Catholic Church—tried to bolster their own position through a reinterpretation of the Hebrew Bible and the history of the biblical Israelites. While the precedent from ancient Jewish history became central to intra-Christian conflicts over the role of the church in society, postbiblical Judaism also acquired new value as a living source of information about Israelite history. Some of the seminal works that reflect this new political interest in Jews bolstered arguments for the toleration of Jews while also advancing anti-Catholic positions.

Texts most often discussed in the context of the history of Jewish–Christian relations are thus also part of the history of secularism and anti-Catholicism. We can see this clearly if we consider that the most important turning points in German and French opinions about Jews emerged in response to events in the history of Protestant–Catholic relations. One of these crucial moments was the 1685 revocation of the
Edict of Nantes, which sent large numbers of French Calvinists into exile. These exiles’ attempts to come to terms with the theological and world historical meaning of expulsion and persecution influenced enlightened debates about Jews across Europe. For members of the so-called moderate party among the Huguenots in the Dutch Republic, toleration was a weapon to be used against the types of religion that had turned them into refugees. We can see this motive in Bernard Picart and Jean Frederic Bernard’s immensely popular *Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde* [Religious Ceremonies and Customs of all the People of the World] (1723), which included Jews as one among many faiths. Framed in part by Picart’s deist commitments, rabbinical Judaism appeared in this encyclopedic overview of the world’s religions as a tradition that needed to be understood—rather than judged—with the same methods that one would use to describe Lutheran and Calvinist Protestantism, Catholicism, Islam, and the so-called heathen religions. Redefining religion as a universal anthropological phenomenon, this work depicted all religions as peculiar and capable of superstitious forms, making Judaism appear less exotic than it had in earlier European writings. At the same time, the book argued that some religions—most notably Catholicism—were more prone to fanaticism than others. The same approach that made Judaism appear familiar made Catholicism appear strangely unfamiliar.

The polemical undercurrent of Bernard and Picart’s work could be ignored by readers who preferred to focus on the authors’ other achievement, which was their popularization of a unified approach for the description of different religions. In other texts that developed out of the same Huguenot milieu, the polemical thrust was harder to ignore. Pierre Bayle’s friend Jacques Basnage (1653–1723) more clearly used his discussion of Jews in an attempt to denounce other denominations. Basnage’s search for the meaning of exile and the survival of communities of faith under persecution are major themes of his *Histoire des Juifs* (1706–1707), which has been hailed as the first comprehensive history of the Jews. Although he depicted Jewish suffering as the result of the Jews’ rejection of Jesus and, thus, of divine punishment, Basnage also showed much sympathy for their fate and demanded toleration for them. His position was not just an expression of empathy for another oppressed and exiled group, however. It also offered him an occasion
to contrast Protestant practices with Catholic intolerance, which—according to Protestant polemists—had prevented Jews from converting to Christianity.\textsuperscript{33} The analogy between the development of a false rabbinic tradition out of true revelation and the similar corruption of God’s word by the Catholic Church proved especially fertile ground for anti-Catholic commentaries.\textsuperscript{34} Even though Basnage did not develop his anti-Catholicism “into a sustained allegorical argument,” as the historian Adam Sutcliffe has noted, his anti-Catholic positions gave additional meaning to his description of Jewish beliefs and suffering.\textsuperscript{35} Among the moderate party of the exiled French Protestants of late seventeenth and early eighteenth-century Europe, as for many other European Protestants, sympathies toward Jews often had as much to do with their attempts to gain advantages in their confessional conflicts with Catholicism as with their efforts to promote new ideas of religious toleration. These early historical and ethnographic narratives of fanaticism and anti-fanaticism, both of which used Jews and Catholics as foils, created patterns of comparison that persisted in secularist debates through the present.\textsuperscript{36}

The \textit{Lettres juives}, published by the marquis d’Argens (1704–1771) between 1735 and 1737, offer another influential version of this entanglement of anti-Church criticism, secularism, and—in this case—non-religious philosemitism. D’Argens was a nobleman from Provence who became a deist and prominent enemy of organized religion. Living and publishing first in the Dutch Republic, he eventually moved to Berlin in the 1840s, where he was close to Fredrick II as well as nonaristocratic enlighteners like Friedrich Nicolai (1733–1811).\textsuperscript{37} Modeled on Montesquieu’s \textit{Persian Letters} (1726), the \textit{Lettres juives} features the voice of a foreigner who writes an anticlerical ethnography of Europe’s dark side.\textsuperscript{38} Rather than allowing us to see France and other European countries through the eyes of Persian noblemen, however, the Oriental protagonist of d’Argens’s work is a Jewish traveler from Constantinople named Aaron.

As in many other epistolary treatises of this type, the main character, introduced as an exotic outsider, appears less and less foreign the more he describes his alienating experiences in Europe. A tale of moral improvement, the book portrays its Oriental Jewish protagonist as successively more enlightened (and, by implication, more European) the
more he observes, and distances himself from, Catholicism. Indeed, the true Orientals in d’Argens’s novel are not the Jews but the Jesuits, whose origins and politics Aaron explains to his interlocutor Isaac with a reference to Muslims. “If you examine the conduct of the Jesuits carefully, you notice that they are very similar to the Muslims. They employ the same methods as the latter to expand their sects, and try like them to seduce men, flattering their passions and scaring them.”

Thus the Jesuits appear intelligible to the Eastern traveler because of the “parallel between Turkish and Jesuitic politics.” Aaron, familiar with that other Oriental figure—the Muslim—recognizes in the Jesuit the true, fanatical, and superstitious Oriental. In d’Argens’s novel, a Jewish character becomes the tool for the expression of anticlerical critique. Secularist ideas about proper religiosity thus emerged equally in the texts of Huguenot writers and deist Catholics as part of their shared rejection of what they qualified as Catholic superstitions and backwardness. Jews were crucial symbols in conflicts between Protestants and Catholics, as well as those between Enlightenment thinkers and conservative Catholics, because they helped anti-Catholic writers place their main foil—Catholicism—into greater relief.

D’Argens found successors not only in France but also in Germany, where such polemics were more often interpreted in the context of the competition between the Christian denominations. Here too we can detect the continuation of Basnage’s attempt to simultaneously familiarize readers with Jewish history and defamiliarize Catholic Christianity. The most famous anti-Catholic work of the German Enlightenment, Friedrich Nicolai’s **Beschreibung einer Reise durch Deutschland und die Schweiz, im Jahre 1781** [Description of a Voyage through Germany and Switzerland in the Year 1781], for example, frequently dwells sympathetically on the treatment of Jews in past and present. Nicolai was an influential Berlin publisher, a friend of Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786), and one of the most articulate proponents of a markedly Protestant vision of rational society in the late eighteenth century. His travels through the southern parts of the German Empire were intended to introduce him and his northern German compatriots to regions of the fatherland he assumed were little known to his readers. Describing the Catholic South’s traditions, economy, and its inhabitants’ physical characteristics, Nicolai drew on the narratives of other Protestant travelers—par-
particularly those from England—as well as d’Argens’s fictive traveler who
discovered much that was peculiar and exotic in the religious practices
of Catholics. Throughout the work, Nicolai’s ridicule was reserved
principally for the unbridled consumption patterns of the Catholic
population and especially the clergy. Rarely did priests appear in Nico-
lai’s narrative without large paunches nurtured by the excessive intake
of food and alcohol.

Unlike the geographic descriptions of most contemporaries, Nico-
lai’s travelogue also addressed the persecution of Jews at various points
along his itinerary, ranging from historical instances of anti-Judaism in
Franconia to the humiliations Jews experienced in Nuremberg during
his own day. Although Nicolai did not claim that anti-Jewish persecu-
tions were a genuinely or exclusively Catholic phenomenon (nor could
he have plausibly done so), the emphasis he placed on Jewish suffering
in his anti-Catholic description of Germany is nonetheless remarkable.
For Nicolai, unlike most of the authors of his time, the construction of
the Catholic St. Leopold Church on top of the destroyed synagogue in
Vienna’s old Jewish district was a poignant example worthy of inclusion
in print. This early anti-Catholic ethnography of German lands was
thus also one of Germany’s first national geographies of anti-Judaism.

The combination of ambivalent philosemitism and anti-Catholicism
that was characteristic of the works of Basnage, d’Argens, and Nicolai
was not the only model of anticlericalism available to European authors
in the eighteenth century. Voltaire, the most famous Enlightenment
thinker to write about both Jews and Catholics, offers perhaps the
most dramatic counterexample to the anti-Catholic philosemitism of
the previously mentioned authors. Scholarship on the place of Jews in
Voltaire’s work long took its cues mostly from Arthur Hertzberg, who
argued that the emblematic Enlightenment thinker was a forerunner of
modern antisemitism because his anti-Christian polemics against the
Hebrew Bible went hand in hand with his depiction of Jews as an etern-
ally alien race. According to this reading, Voltaire’s primary concern
was to critique the Hebrew Bible as well as the Jews as the source of
Catholic Christianity.

Various scholars have subsequently complicated this view, empha-
sizing instead the tensions inherent in Voltaire’s work. Indeed, in
different contexts, Voltaire depicted Judaism both as the source of
Christianity and as something entirely distinct from it. Jews even served as a positive foil in some of his anticlerical arguments, just as they had for d'Argens. In his Philosophical Dictionary, for example, Voltaire noted that the Jews' "bottomless" intolerance was nonetheless limited by the fact that they were entirely unconcerned with those around them. In contrast, it was the Christians who became missionaries of fanaticism in Voltaire's view. As he put it succinctly in his dictionary, "The Jews didn't want the statue of Jupiter in Jerusalem; but the Christians didn't want it in the Capitol." Whereas the Jews were merely defending their own environment against encroachment from the Romans, in other words, the Christians tried to refashion the empire as a whole. In light of this dangerous Christian—and, in Voltaire's political context, Catholic—form of fanaticism, could one blame Jews for staying Jews?

Voltaire also praised the obstinacy of the Jews at times, portraying it, as Ronald Schechter has aptly noted, as a sign of their potential for fidelity. In the Henriade, Voltaire's epic poem on civil war and religious fanaticism, he wrote of the auto-da-fés against Jews who were burnt "for not having left the faith of their ancestors." Less dangerous than Christians and victimized by the Catholic Church for their unwillingness to abandon their convictions, Jews could sometimes appear as a (relatively) positive foil for the type of fanatical religion Voltaire intended to critique. Although he did not systematically depict Jews as victims of religious persecution, as some of his contemporaries did, Voltaire also participated in a tradition that connected discourses on Catholics and Jews in multiple and contradictory ways.

Much like Basnage's Histoire, Voltaire's work offers no single pattern that connects philosemitism or antisemitism with anti-Catholicism, or a hatred of the Inquisition with a love for Jews. Like the other eighteenth-century examples noted here, reference to Voltaire's work can nonetheless illustrate how Judaism and Catholicism became closely imbricated in a variety of Enlightenment texts that exerted long-lasting influence on the narratives of later secularists. In many texts that offered a relatively sanguine view of the Jews, denominational and non-denominational polemics against Catholicism contributed to a shift in writers' understanding of Judaism as merely one religion among many. Although such depictions regularly depicted Judaism as a faith capable of fostering fanaticism, they also argued that Jews had also been
unfairly persecuted for centuries, particularly by the Catholic Church. Anti-Catholicism—and with it allosematism—was hardwired into the modern rhetoric of progress in both the French and German sphere.

Nationalism and the Turn to Religion as a Resource

Enlighteners like Nicolai, d’Argens, and Voltaire spoke about Judaism and Jews as part of their attempts to critique existing religious institutions and excise what they viewed as fanaticism from positions of power. During and after the Napoleonic wars, a very different intellectual tradition associated with romanticism gained strength on the left and the right. While the various romanticisms that emerged in this period had different political thrusts in Germany and France, they had one thing in common that explains their shared focus on both Judaism and Catholicism. In both countries, romantics turned to history and religion to explain the fate of nations and states. The romantics’ critique of both Jews and the Catholic Church shaped this historically informed understanding of progress and national belonging.

The comparison of Judaism and Catholicism in romantic thought is, in many respects, unusual, especially to students of German history. In the German context, romanticism is most often associated not only with a celebration of Catholicism but also with a rejection of Jews as alien to the nation. Indeed, many scholars have suggested that the emergence of romanticism marks one of the points of origin of modern antisemitism. Similar claims are rarely made about modern anti-Catholicism. As I will argue here, however, there are good reasons to analyze the relationship between romanticism and anti-Catholicism anew.

The romantic idealization of Catholicism, particularly in the German context, frequently implied a rejection of existing forms of Catholicism. Much like Judaism, Catholicism appeared to certain German romantics as something dead, which deserved to be brought back to life in a different form. Novalis’s (1772–1801) famous idealization of medieval Catholicism as the model for any future politico-religious order in his essay “Christianity or Europe” was possible because he saw the existing form of Catholicism as irrelevant. In other words, an idealized—and, in this case, cosmopolitan—version of Catholicism was in need
of revival precisely because it had disappeared as a reality. Indeed, for Novalis, Rome had been corrupted to the point that it stopped representing authentic Catholicism and had become instead another Jerusalem. Powers of the Counter-Reformation like the (dissolved) Jesuits were similarly absent from Novalis’s vision of Catholic renewal. He portrayed them only as an obstacle to the kind of Catholicism he believed would be reborn in a new reformation.

Although the romantics’ rejection of contemporary Catholicism was different from their attacks on Jews, both Catholicism and Jews figured in their reflections on authenticity and political cohesion. Johann Gottfried Herder (1774–1803), one of the pioneers of this type of thought, offers a complicated case of such an entanglement. In his later years, Herder famously viewed Jews as a separate tribe that could serve as a model for the overlap of religion, language, culture, and nation he aspired to establish for the German people. According to Herder, the Jews and Irish were the prototypical national religious groups whose suffering had ennobled them. Precisely because he used them as a positive template for autonomous wholeness in a people, Herder also depicted Jews as eternally foreign to the German nation and to Europe as a whole. Jews were foreigners, and their presence in Germany thus had to be regulated not by agreements concerning religious coexistence but rather according to the political exigencies of European states.

Beyond suggesting that the Jewish people could serve as a model to the Germans, Herder argued that Jews and Germans also had important historical experiences in common. Like the Jews, Germans had to learn to mourn the loss of their original national religion, which was wiped out by Roman Catholicism, in order to recuperate a similar type of resilient national religious culture. Catholicism had replaced local vernaculars, which allowed for true national expressions of religion, with an abstract Latin pronounced by priests who distanced the people from God. Significantly, in his dialogues on national religion, Herder presented Jesus as a man of the people who barely understood the court language of Latin. Herder’s program of Germanic religion not only derided Latin culture but also suggested that German Catholics should abandon that legacy in order to become truly German. Herder similarly considered Hebrew and Latin prayers as incommensurable with German nationalism, which he believed should treat both religion and
language as part of a larger national culture. Neither Jews nor Catholicism was truly German, in his view, but their role was fundamentally different in his analysis. Indeed, he suggested that Jews had nothing to offer to Germany despite the fact that Judaism could serve Germans as a model, whereas Catholics could be German as long as they abandoned Catholicism. Particularly in his later writings, Herder called for Germans to follow a Jewish model of nationhood in order to remedy Catholicism’s corrupting influence on their own nation.

The implications of this type of thought for Jews and Catholics remained distinct. Whereas most German romantics hoped that their models would transcend the divisions between Protestants and Catholics, no such expectations existed about the distinctions between Jews and Christians. After their early liberal years in the late eighteenth century, many German romantics became enemies of full civil rights for Jews but not for Catholics or Protestants.

The writings of Herder and Novalis on the subject constitute only a fraction of the large corpus of German romantic texts from the period, yet both suggest an entangled history of romantic anti-Judaism and anti-Catholicism that has continued to go unnoticed in much of the scholarship. Herder’s romantic reimagining of Hebrew national religion, as well as Novalis’s idea of an undivided medieval Catholicism, remained part of the repertoire of conservative and liberal nationalists alike throughout the nineteenth century. It was less their solutions than their way of posing the problem that influenced those who hoped that Germany—until 1871 an imagined country—would transcend its religious divisions. Herder was not alone among romantic thinkers in depicting Jews as the true outsiders to Germany and Europe. Paradoxically, this position allowed Herder as well as other romantics to portray Jews as less of an integral challenge to the formation of a unified German state than Catholicism, which many romantics described as central to the German predicament. For these Protestant romantics, a secularist vision of a nation transcending denominations relied on a vision of both Jews and Catholics as alien, with Jews serving as the foil for a primordial form of national unity and Catholicism as an obstacle to present and future spiritual unification.

In France, the romantic turn to religion and history had a very different impact on debates about Jews and Catholicism. In the French
case little evidence of the overlap of anti-Catholicism and anti-Judaism can be found in the works of the most vocal opponents of Jewish legal equality, as was the case among influential German romantics. In the writings of Joseph de Maistre (1753–1821) and Louis de Bonald (1754–1840), the rejection of the revolutionary legacy of Jewish civic rights went hand in hand with these authors’ advocacy of the return to a Christian, and specifically Catholic, state in France. The growing influence of the French Counter-Enlightenment during the Napoleonic and Restoration eras, as well as the eventual emergence of the prominent anti-Jewish Catholic journalist Louis Veuillot (1813–1883) in the 1840s, made it easy for observers in the nineteenth century and today to identify Catholicism, monarchism, and anti-Judaism as key ingredients of early French romantic thought.

These were not the only voices in the debate on religion and politics that appeared in France during the first half of the nineteenth century, however. French liberal thinkers and left-wing romantics were as concerned with the crisis of order and morality as were conservatives. Much as in Germany, the renewed interest in the potential role of religion as a source of liberal or radical politics went hand in hand with a return to history as a source of legitimation and inspiration. Political authors and historians such as François Guizot (1787–1874) in the 1820s, or Edgar Quinet (1803–1875) and Jules Michelet (1798–1874) in the 1830s and 1840s, all agreed that religion was crucial for the proper functioning of the state. As in Germany, it was no contradiction for individuals to be both anticlerical and to seek either the renewal of Catholicism or the rediscovery of an original form of Catholicism purified of its hierarchical, restricting, and superstitious accretions. Such arguments were popular even among French socialists who continued the romantic’s emphasis on religion as a basis for a social revolution, such as Louis Blanc and Étienne Cabet during the July Monarchy (1830–1848) and the Second Republic (1848–1852). Both political leaders extolled what they described as the true Christianity, a form of religion they distinguished from that upheld by the Catholic clergy. Other French liberals promoted Protestantism or a reformed Christian religiosity as a solution, including Madame de Staël (1766–1817), Benjamin Constant, Guizot, and Quinet. This turn to religion was substantially different from the outlook of Protestant and secular nationalists in Germany,
however. Irrespective of the position they took, French liberals limited their debate to the way religion would come to structure society and state. They gave little thought to the question of how it would define the limits of the nation. In this debate, Catholicism was a much more important topic than Judaism.

On other occasions, calls to regenerate the nation by reforming religion shifted the focus back to Judaism as an atavistic religion incapable of reform. Although this type of argument never took center stage in France, as it did in Germany, it was not unknown among liberal French romantics. Madame de Staël adopted Herder’s theories of national character in her early work, for example, and found relatively little to commend in the traditions of Jews, Catholics, or Muslims. In her *de la Littérature* (1800), she remarked on the incapacity of Jews and Muslims to experience the type of melancholy typical of the peoples of the North. While Orientals regret only that they cannot live forever, she posited, northerners suffer from a deep melancholy of the mind that allows them to write great literature. Like Herder, Madame de Staël found positive traits within all literary traditions but saw Protestant culture as the most mature expression of the value of freedom. In her vision, inspired in part by German romantics like August Wilhelm Schlegel, the South included both the Near East and Rome. According to de Staël, neither region was capable of fostering a movement toward liberty. While her writings may have had some influence on early French romantics, however, her comments did not become constitutive of liberal romantic literature in France as a whole. More important still, the liberal romantic tradition in France did not produce a challenge to Jewish civic rights, as it had in Germany.

A different, more radical form of antisemitism and anti-Catholicism marked by a romantic turn to religion and history did emerge among supporters of the radical revolutionary legacy in France, however. Several French leftists embraced antisemitism as well as anti-Christian anticlericalism by building not only on the oeuvre of Voltaire but also on the racialized sense of national spirit that appeared in Madame de Staël’s work. This pattern emerges clearly in the writings of Pierre Proudhon (1809–1865), who tried to save the monotheistic idea from association with Judaism. In Proudhon’s words, monotheism was “so little a Jewish or Semitic idea that the race of Shem can be said to have been
repudiated by it [. . .] Monotheism is a creation of the Indo-Germanic spirit and could not have arisen from any other source. According to Proudhon, the racial origin of Judaism also explained the “wicked superstition called Catholicism.” One of the later representatives of this same school of thought was Gustave Tridon (1841–1871), a Blanquist and member of the Paris Commune. For Tridon, Judaism was a religion of human sacrifices that emerged from the cult of Moloch; it was the evil root at the core of all theism that could only be overcome through atheism. Here antisemitism, anti-Catholicism, and anti-religiosity were married in a way that made it easy for believing Jews and Catholics to denounce all three discourses together as unacceptable forms of militant anti-religious secularism.

Despite their shared unease in the face of such arguments, Jews and Catholics experienced opportunities and limitations differently in Germany and France; in the two countries, these groups were regulated by different laws and had a different relationship to romantic politics. There were also similarities, however, that shaped Jews’ and Catholics’ perceptions of their position in society. The romantic concern with history and religion as political culture made Judaism, Catholicism, and Protestantism equally central political symbols of romantic discourse. As liberals as well as their detractors defined religion in cultural terms, religion increasingly became associated not only with ideas of a unified state but also with attempts to forge a homogeneous nation. Each religious community played a different part in this high-stakes game for the viability and world-historical role of different nations. Reference to different denominations and religions thus became relevant for secularist visions of good citizenship not as isolated symbols—as one might gather from literature focusing, for example, only on the rise of romantic antisemitism—but rather in permanent relation to other groups that stood in for progress and backwardness in turn.

Liberal Anti-Catholicism and Jewish Particularity

With the rise of liberal anticlericalism in the middle decades of the nineteenth century in both Germany and France, a new version of the entanglement of anti-Catholicism and anti-Judaism came into ex-
existence. Although the transition from romantic nationalism to liberal politics entailed strong continuities, for the purpose of this survey one discontinuity in particular is worth highlighting: Among nineteenth-century liberals, as well as democrats and republicans, the preoccupation with the Catholic Church became predominant, while interest in Jews diminished. In this age of liberal and middle-class ascendancy, the relations between church and state as well as expectations about decorum in religious practice took center stage. In the process, Catholicism emerged as the principal Other of the French and German liberal middle classes. Even though relatively few authors wrote directly about the place of Jews in society during this period, Jews emerged as important symbols in debates about Catholicism. We can thus see a tendency that began with the Huguenot authors of Amsterdam like Basnage before gaining traction in the mid-nineteenth century: Allosemitism, or the discussion of Jews as an essentialized Other, proved a common feature in debates about Catholicism.

The most successful anticlerical novel of the nineteenth century offers a clear illustration of this tendency. Eugène Sue’s (1804–1857) Le juif errant, published in installments throughout 1844 and 1845, used the myth of the Wandering Jew as a frame narrative for a work aimed against the Jesuits. The Wandering Jew, Ahasver, and to some extent the Wandering Jewess, Herodia, were the tragic heroes, but not the main figures, of Sue’s novel. The principal protagonists are rather a persecuted Protestant family, the Renneports, and the Jesuits who seek to rob the Renneports of their wealth. Ahasver serves as the guardian angel of the novel’s tragic victims but makes only a few appearances. The narrative receives its ultimate coherence through the machinations of the Jesuits, depicted as a combination of a global crime syndicate and a brutal cult.

In all these regards the novel can be understood as straightforward in its anticlericalism and philosemitic in its depiction of Jews. This impression changes if we focus not on the theme of evil but rather on that of sterility, which inscribes the story in the larger narrative of human progress and national development that Sue aimed to tell. Identifying the affinities between his cult and the Jesuits, the leader of an Indian religious sect of fanatical assassins who joins the Jesuits explains, “[The Goddess]Bowane makes corpses which rot in the ground. The Society [of Jesus]
makes corpses which walk about.” This is not just a reference to “pere-indre-ac cadaver,” the Jesuit principle of submitting oneself like a corpse, but rather to the manner in which the Jesuits stand for both evil and sterility or death in Sue’s work. For Sue, the Jesuits create continuity merely as a criminal organization, yet they bear no children and cannot offer anything to sustain the nation or move it into the future.

Curiously, the Jews of the novel, who are altogether positive figures, are equally sterile. The Wandering Jew, a shoemaker who denied Jesus a resting place before the crucifixion, represents the workers of the earth in Sue’s depiction. When his time as protector of the Renneport family ends due to their demise, he too is allowed to die, as is the Wandering Jewess. His death, Sue informs us, means the redemption of the world’s artisans who, like the Wandering Jew, forever toil and are driven from their rightful place. The two other Jews of the novel, Samuel, the keeper of the Renneport estate, and his wife Batsheba, are equally positive figures. Like the two mythical Jews of the novel, it becomes clear that they will die without offspring after their only son is killed in Russia. Symbols of great fidelity, the Jews of the novel have no progeny and disappear once their role is fulfilled. Their disappearance, however, announces a new productive age, symbolized by the family of a Napoleonic soldier who turns to agriculture. In this anti-Catholic roman feuilleton both Jews and Jesuits have a role in the future of the nation and humanity only in the sense that their demise marks the beginning of a new age. In a manner typical of liberal French authors of the period, Sue not only used the philosemitic image of the Wandering Jew—and by extension all Jews—as the symbol for suffering humanity; he also employed the anti-Jewish trope of Christian supersession in secularized form to push his anticlerical agenda.

The close relationship between anticlericalism and allosemitism is even more tangible in the case of German liberals active between 1840 and 1880. For reasons that are disputed among scholars, German liberals switched to a more welcoming attitude toward Jews at some point around 1844–1845. In the process, they also started to vote for Jewish civic rights in certain state parliaments. While anti-Jewish statements did not disappear, the majority of liberals across the German states represented in the Frankfurt Parliament of 1848 abandoned demands that civic equality would either presuppose or result in Jews and non-Jews
being indistinguishable. By this time, when liberals could vote on national legislation, their decisions regarding Jews as well as a religiously neutral state approximated the opinions expressed in the French parliament of spring and summer 1848.

Precisely as issues of Jewish emancipation became less contentious in German circles, liberals’ conflicts with the Catholic Church and its supporters became most pronounced. After the *Trierer Wallfahrt* of 1844, when approximately 500,000 pilgrims went to Trier to see the exhibition of the Holy Coat, stereotypes of the gullible, superstitious Catholicism and a manipulative Catholic Church entered political debates in an unprecedented manner. The most intense period of conflict between 1858 and the end of the *Kulturkampf* in the late 1870s was also the period when Jews seemed most welcome as political allies of Protestant liberals in Germany.

Liberal anti-Judaism continued in spite of this lull in debates, but its relationship to philosemitism and anti-Catholicism became more complicated as German liberalism became increasingly inviting to Jews. Evidence of these simultaneous shifts in opinions toward Jews and Catholicism is unmistakable in the *Staats-Lexikon*, a multivolume dictionary published by two Southwest German authors in several editions meant to form the definitive collection of liberal thought in Germany. Much like Diderot and d’Alembert’s *Encyclopédie* of the eighteenth century, Rotteck and Welcker’s encyclopedia depended on the contribution of different like-minded scholars and was thus not of one piece. Rather than represent a single liberal opinion, its entries created a conversation on the most important political and legal issues of the day.

In the first edition of the *Staats-Lexikon* published between 1834 and 1843, Jews and Jewish themes did not feature prominently. Before the Jewish reformer Sigismund Stern contributed to the third edition in 1863, only two entries referred to Jews at any length. The first of these dealt exclusively with the Hebrews of the Biblical period and was written by H. E. G. Paulus, a liberal Protestant theologian and opponent of Jewish equality. The second, offering the only discussion of a modern Jewish topic, was an entry by the linguist Franz Bopp (1791–1867) on “Judenschutz und Judenabgabe,” two expressions used for the special taxes and concomitant protective relationship with the sovereign that defined Jewish life in German lands well into the nineteenth century.
As many historians had done since Basnage, Bopp documented the exclusion and persecution of Jews in meticulous detail. Yet, whereas Basnage drew mainly theological lessons from his account of Jewish suffering, for Bopp the same history held a different message, which was that nations should never become dependent on other nations for protection. Given this perspective, no guarantees were sufficient “to protect the descendents of an Oriental tribe [Volksstamm] from oppression and persecution.”

Bopp certainly advocated an end to the persecution of Jews, but his historical description left open the question of whether the Jews remained Orientals or whether their separate existence had come to an end through assimilation in the modern era. Whatever Bopp’s final judgment on Jews’ foreign character might have been, his main aim was to highlight his opposition to fanatical religion and to champion national strength. For this purpose, the persecution of the Jews could serve as a morality tale.

If the Staats-Lexicon articulated a sympathetic if ambiguous vision of Jews, its overall position on the Catholic Church was self-consciously critical. Although the multitome work was written predominantly by Protestant liberals, the editors left the entry on Catholicism to a representative of conservative Catholicism, Johann Baptist Hirscher (1788–1865).

Compared to the entries on Jewish themes, this article is remarkable in its defensive tone. Hirscher, a professor of theology at Tübingen, opened by justifying the inclusion of an entry on Catholicism in an encyclopedia of political science. The welfare of the state depended on the respect different groups showed one another, Hirscher wrote: “This is therefore the place to vindicate the honor of the millions who confess adherence to Catholicism by showing the essence of this denomination, even if it will not be possible to ensure the approval of those who disagree with us.”

Hirscher went on to argue for the usefulness of Catholicism to the state before pleading with his readers to show patience as Catholicism took the necessary steps to become a modern religion. Rather than attempting to simply describe Catholicism, Hirscher offered an apology aimed at retaining the honor of his denomination, just as many Jews did in this period.

The entry on the constitution of the Catholic Church offered a counterposition to Hirscher. The author distinguished between ultramontane and episcopalian strands within the Catholic Church, claiming that
episcopalian Catholicism was its only authentic interpretation. This, in turn, meant that the dissident German Catholics, who organized communities outside the Catholic Church after 1844, were the true representatives of Catholicism. Thus redefined, Catholicism had to reject the principles of a pope-oriented and historically false church “that every Protestant or true historical mind [Geschichtsforscher] would also deny.” Catholicism, in other words, had to transform its very core to embody the type of Christianity that liberals viewed as compatible with the state.

The anti-Catholic character of this vision comes into focus in the entries on those institutions that Catholics were expected to abandon in order to participate in the liberal state. The lexicon’s essay on “Monasteries,” for example, was dedicated to proving that the activities of monasteries were contrary to religion as well as “a rationally organized state.” In an effort to challenge the very existence of such institutions, the author put much effort into proving that it was a historical error to believe that monasteries had been useful as centers of culture even in the Middle Ages.

No article on Judaism or Catholicism could match the paranoid language of S. Jordan’s long entry on “Jesuits,” however. Much as Jules Michelet and Edgar Quinet would do in their French lectures at the Collège de France a few years later, Jordan spoke not only of Jesuits but also of a corrupt system based on intrigue and skillful manipulation, which he referred to as Jesuitism. As he explained it in his entry, the ultimate aim of the Jesuits and Jesuitism were “the resurrection of Rome’s rule in its full glory on the ruins of the destroyed Reformation, to build on the ruins of civilization the empire of darkness and superstition, and thus bring back a time of barbarism, inquisition, and auto-da-fés.”

Unlike Voltaire’s double interest in Jews as both victims and examples of intolerance, the vision of Jewish suffering at the hands of Catholic persecutors remained dominant in this German compendium of liberal thought. Even before the southwest German liberals who stood behind this anthology started to support Jewish rights in local parliaments, their interest turned more decisively toward Jews as victims of medieval fanaticism and the Inquisition, which, they alleged, the Jesuits were trying to reinstate.
A similar dynamic is characteristic of the works of Gustav Freytag (1816–1895), who is remembered today principally as the author of the most successful antisemitic novel in German literary history, entitled *Soll und Haben* [Credit and Debit] (1855). There is, indeed, little in this notorious novel that would merit a reevaluation of such an assessment. Written in a didactic style, each of its characters is an overdetermined representation of a societal trend or type. The main Jewish characters are all physically inadequate, including the central Jewish villain Itzig, the corrupt Schmeike Tinkeles, and the valiant but unworldly Bernard. Each of these Jewish characters embodies the opposite of the healthy, nationalist, masculine Protestant main character, Anton. While readers follows Anton’s slow but honorable coming of age before witnessing his transformation into a great man, they see the Jews’ precipitous rise and fall through personal disgrace or their death due to physical weakness. There are no Catholic figures that are equivalent to these Jewish characters. Indeed, Catholicism hardly figures in the novel. Although it is possible that the Polish insurrectionists that appear in the text are Catholics, Freytag never makes this explicit to his readers. Because the novel allows only for one personification of each type, the Polish characters appear above all as foreigners to the German nation. Freytag avoids complicating this distinction further by exploring the differences between German Protestants and Catholics. The other principle group that he depicts as antithetical to the ideal new caste of ethical trader-citizens are aristocrats. Their vanity and inflexibility ultimately corrupts them. Ruined by excessive pride but unwilling to engage with the world of trade, in Freytag’s novel they mirror the Jews—who are similarly greedy, if even more viscerally driven to profit at all cost and more cunning in their endeavors.

The entanglement of discourses on Judaism and Catholicism did not disappear among liberal nationalists like Freytag, however. The connection between debates on Jews and Catholics comes into focus once again if we look at Freytag’s anticlerical works, such as his *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit* [Pictures from the German Past]. Freytag wrote this tremendously popular attempt at cultural history between 1859 and 1867, around the time when he began to declare himself an enemy of anti-Jewish agitation (even if his own apologetics in favor of Jews and against Richard Wagner reproduce many anti-Jewish stereo-
types). According to Freytag’s later work, both Jews and the Catholic Church were too proud of their past to accept a universal message of love. Both groups take the place that was occupied by the aristocracy in *Soll und Haben*: They are self-absorbed and, at least in principle, unable to modernize.

Unlike in *Soll und Haben*, however, in *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit* it is not the Jews but rather the Jesuits that became Freytag’s dominant foil for his depiction of a citizenry grounded in Christian and commercial ethics. Comparing the progress of Jews and Jesuits in the modern period, he wrote:

This new *Bildung* also raised the Jews, their fanaticism had disappeared since Christian zeal stopped persecuting them. The grandchildren of this Asiatic wandering tribe are our compatriots and brotherly comrades. The clerical Society of Jesus on the other hand, [ . . . ] is until today—just like on the first day they immigrated to Germany—alien to German life.

It should be noted that even in this vision Jews remained a recently naturalized group that was understood to have descended from an Asiatic wandering tribe. The fact that the Jesuits were higher on the list of Germany’s dangerous enemies than Jews in this depiction did not erase the suspicion that Jews were not Germans; on the contrary, Freytag’s rhetorical games conserved that difference. His juxtaposition of Jesuits and Jews was meant to work because of his suggestion that both groups, in their unredeemed state, were examples of a foreign form of fanatic religiosity. Freytag’s position was, in this regard, typical of debates on national belonging that centered on the question of the comparative Germanness of various groups. Even if they were more German than Jesuits, the Jews continued to elicit concern about their alien character.

The evidence from German and French debates from the 1840s to the 1860s shows that discussions about Catholicism partially eclipsed the interest in Jews. Liberals now viewed Catholicism as the main antagonist in their quest for a peaceful and fertile society of decent, authentic, and rational citizens. Paradoxically, this new preoccupation also kept alive the peculiar secularist concern with Jews as a foil. Until the rise of political antisemitism in the late 1870s, both negative and
positive images of Jews surfaced in the heated liberal polemics about Catholicism. Although Catholicism became the principal target of the ascendant liberal middle classes of the mid-nineteenth century, even when they hoped to join anti-Catholic campaigns, Jews could not easily disentangle their own position from that of Catholics. They remained symbols of sterility and of a people superseded that stood at the core of liberal ideas of progress, even if liberals did not commonly treat Jews as the main obstacles to the new era they envisioned.

The Kulturkampf, the Guerre des deux France, and the Antisemitic Movement

While few writers theorized the relation between antisemitism and anti-Catholicism before 1870, after this point a large number of individuals began to venture explanations about how one phenomenon had caused the other. In 1870s Germany, the notion was popular that Jewish involvement in liberal campaigns against the Catholic Church influenced the way different groups perceived Jews. This idea has regularly been repeated since. Starting in the late nineteenth century, commentators have noted that the antisemitic movement began as the Kulturkampf ended. In the early 1870s, writers for Catholic periodicals such as *Germania* denounced Jews as part of a liberal–Protestant alliance that was—in their eyes—determined to undermine both the Catholic Church and religion. This trope was soon picked up by Protestant antisemites, who accused Jews of undermining the nation by sowing dissent among Germans of different Christian denominations.

Jews and Catholics were inextricably linked in these renewed debates on secularism, though in new configurations. In many such discussions, Catholics came to stand for resistance to modernity and secularism while Jews came to represent a destructive form of modernity and a radicalized, materialistic secularism. At other times, both groups continued to figure as enemies of the nation. Even the narrow group of dedicated antisemites in Germany was split between those who condemned the Kulturkampf in their writings and those who saw it as a model. Otto Glagau (1834–1892) supported the former position. He believed that
the Germans had been fighting the wrong *Kulturkampf*—that is, that their fight against Catholics had been misplaced and that they should have been fighting instead against Jews. A Protestant who received support from antisemitic Catholics, Glagau claimed that Jews had inflamed the tensions between the Christian denominations to cover up their intention to defraud non-Jewish Germans. Eugen Dühring (1833–1921), another prominent antisemite of the era, was perhaps more typical when he articulated a preference for the exclusion of Jews from society without fully condemning campaigns against Catholicism. For Dühring, the anti-Catholic *Kulturkampf* served mainly as inspiration for future anti-Jewish legislation: Citing the 1872 law that expelled all Jesuits from Germany, including those in possession of German citizenship, Dühring suggested that similar measures could be taken against Jews. At the same time, Dühring inverted the strategy Freytag had used in *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit*: He made the Jesuits the foil that explained the inherent malevolence of Jews without fully exculpating the Jesuits. While for Dühring Jesuits merely followed a corporate law that could be overcome by individual members of the order, the Jews could never abandon their Jewishness [*Judenhaftigkeit*], which was an inherent feature of their very being.

According to Dühring, Judaism, like Islam, could only be intolerant or dead; there was no humane form of Judaism.

These disagreements about the relationship between antisemitism and anti-Catholicism in Germany occurred in the face of the antisemitic movement’s difficulties in attracting anti-Jewish Catholics. The denominational tensions between Protestants and Catholics that had peaked in the *Kulturkampf* limited antisemites’ ability to create a sustained political movement. The identification of the antisemitic movement with Protestantism made Catholics in the German Empire—unlike in Habsburg Austria, for example—less likely to support antisemitic parties. The *Kulturkampf* in Germany was thus not so much a cause of political antisemitism as a factor that limited its success. Anti-Catholicism offered both a model for political antisemitism and an obstacle to its development, in other words.

Although certain racial antisemites employed racist discourse in a conscious attempt to overcome denominational divisions between
Protestants and Catholics, confessionalization nonetheless tended to remain an impediment to their projects. In his 1912 political treatise Wenn ich Kaiser wär [If I were Emperor], for example, the Pan-German leader Heinrich Class (1868–1953) depicted Catholics as respectful of authority and conservative in outlook. Explicitly arguing against a new Kulturkampf, he asked Protestants to be patient and to exert less pressure on Catholics as they attempted to integrate into German society.\footnote{103} Jews, on the other hand, constituted a racial enemy who did not deserve political or even basic civil rights. Yet there remained a tension in the statements of such Protestant nationalists between their open calls for denominational reconciliation and their embrace of anti-Catholic Protestant positions in other contexts. This tension is well exemplified in Class’s own life and writing: Although his 1912 treatise called on Protestants to support Catholic attempts to integrate into German society, he also presided over the Alldeutscher Verband, an organization that had as its motto, “Without Judah, without Rome, we will build the all-German [Alldeutschen] dome.”\footnote{104}

In this context, an outright overlap of enmity toward Jews and Catholicism appeared only in the works of anti-Christian antisemites such as Richard Wagner (1813–1883) and Houston Stewart Chamberlain (1855–1927) in Germany or Georg von Schönerer (1842–1921) in Austria. Especially for Chamberlain and Schönerer, the battle ahead would be waged against both “Judah and Rome.”\footnote{105} Chamberlain’s Foundations of the Nineteenth Century (1899) was perhaps the most prominent expression of this idea. In this foundational text of racial antisemitism, Chamberlain transposed the hope for a renewed Germanic, post-Church Christianity into the language of biological, völkisch racism. Germanic religion was destined to overcome the type of Christianity that had emerged from Judaism and that found its more recent incarnation in ultramontane Catholicism. Predictably, anti-Catholic organizations such as the Evangelischer Bund welcomed Chamberlain’s work, while Catholic Germans looked on with dismay.\footnote{106} Even though the influence that anti-Catholic racist antisemites had in the larger Protestant milieu in late nineteenth-century Germany is debatable, they were certainly vocal enough to shape the opinions of a small group of dedicated antisemites in their day. In these circles, we can also find several theories about a secret Jewish–Jesuit alliance that remained marginal in the nine-
teenth century but would later gain prominence among various Nazi propagandists. 107

The perspective from France was quite different. Shulamit Volkov’s suggestion that antisemitism could serve as a cultural code that marked a speaker as a member of a particular anti-emancipatory position applies to nineteenth-century France even more than it does to the German case. 108 In Germany, where civil society was fragmented into socioreligious milieus, this code was intelligible primarily among Protestants who identified each other as belonging to competing liberal and conservative milieus. 109 When applied to France, however, the concept becomes even more powerful. There antisemitism operated as a code that invited contemporaries to view society as split between two large heterogeneous camps, one secular, or laïque, and one Catholic. 110 In late nineteenth-century France, antisemitism became identified with a Catholic camp defined by its opposition to republican laicism, which many Catholic writers denounced as the result of Jewish and Masonic plots.

The boundaries between antisemitic and anticlerical camps were thus much clearer in late nineteenth-century France, as was the idea that each doctrine of hatred had caused the other. French political antisemitism of the late nineteenth century was more compact in its unifying denominational character and better integrated into mainstream Catholic structures than German antisemitism. 111 This is not to say that antisemitism was more widespread in France. The case of Algeria demonstrates that the intensity of the antisemitic movement was not related to the creation of clear boundaries between a republican and a Catholic camp. The three French departments of Algeria are considered the French provinces where antisemitism was strongest. Unlike in the Hexagon, Algerian antisemitism emerged out of an alliance of a radical republican tradition and right-wing and clerical forms of French nationalism. In Algeria during the late 1890s, the anticlericalism and antisemitism of European settlers thus became entangled as nowhere else on the continent, with masonic lodges and socialists at the vanguard of the antisemitic movement. 112

In metropolitan France, anticlericalism and antisemitism were much more antithetical. The camp opposing Catholic antisemitism in France, although neither homogenous nor hermetic, identified not only with
the principal of emancipation—as Volkov’s original model for Germany suggested—but with anticlericalism as well. Bound together by a common enemy, French liberals, opportunists, leftist republicans, and some socialists were willing to ignore their differences during certain periods to unite in their opposition to Catholics. Conspicuous distancing from either Catholics or Jews thus clearly signaled to individuals from different backgrounds adherence to opposing exclusive political causes. It was in France more than in Germany during the late nineteenth century that suspicions against the Jews and the Catholic clergy became mutually sustaining.

Conclusion

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in both Germany and France, anti-Catholicism shaped perceptions of Jews as much as anti-Jewish polemics shaped perceptions of Catholics. Opposition to one group often served as a foil for the relative integration of the other. At other times, the interest in one group kept interest in the other alive. The Jew and the Jesuit, or Judaism and Catholicism, both became the polemical targets of reformers who sought to define notions of proper religiosities and modern citizenship in France and Germany alike. The histories of antisemitism, anticlericalism, and anti-Catholicism cannot be understood in isolation; nor can we grasp the larger history of modern secularism without recognizing their entanglement. The interrelationship between these different forms of Othering appeared not at the margins but rather at the core of Western and Central Europe’s modern political traditions.

Whenever German and French Jews spoke about Catholics in the modern period they inevitably engaged with their own position in society. This was the case because modern secularist expectations about religion invariably linked them to discussions on Catholicism. When Jews attacked what they characterized as the anti-modern, hierarchical character of the Catholic Church, they did so in the context of debates in which their friends and detractors depicted Jews and Catholics in relational terms. At the same time, they engaged with their own status
as a religious community because the very idea of a religion—defined by their contemporaries as a proper religion deserving of legal guarantees—included both Catholics and Jews as a foil. Antisemitism and anticlericalism were ultimately also attempts to keep the notion of religion pure, against those Jews and Catholics who allegedly hid their political and base motives behind the façade of religion.

Finally, it should be noted that the entanglement of anti-Jewish and anti-Catholic rhetoric is something that emerged only rarely as explicit statements in Jewish or Catholic texts. The opinions that Jews and Catholics expressed about one another were seldom consciously shaped by the particular historical narrative presented here. As far as most contemporary Jews were concerned, Jews and Catholics had little in common. Indeed, when Jews reflected on anti-Catholicism and when Catholics thought about antisemitism, they frequently did so without recognizing their intimate imbrication in such debates.

The same is true for other nineteenth and twentieth-century observers. The connection between different constructed enemies was obscured by the fact that they ultimately appeared to motivate different sets of thinkers. Nineteenth-century contemporaries often summarized the political map of Europe in the following manner: Liberals attacked Catholicism, whereas conservatives attacked Jews. Commentators who identified the intersection of anti-Jewish and anti-Catholic positions among anti-religious leftists primarily viewed the phenomenon as a mere curiosity. The fact that Leroy-Beaulieu was nevertheless able to bring the two enmities together was the result of his principled criticism of nationalism and statism as major containers of modern secularism. He rejected the logic of integral Catholic nationalists and of republicans, seeing both anti-Catholicism and antisemitism as expressions of secular nationalism and its demands for homogeneity in society. We can understand the limited reception of Leroy-Beaulieu’s interpretation if we consider that the French republican state achieved one of its great symbolic triumphs just as his Doctrines of Hatred appeared. After their victories in parliamentary elections starting in 1898, republicans strengthened the powers of state while passing new laws to weaken the churches. In 1905, the French parliament decreed the separation of church and state, which was widely understood as retaliation...
against the role conservative nationalists had played in inciting the country during the Dreyfus affair. In the polarized atmosphere of the early twentieth century and with optimism about the potential for a reinforced secularist order at its height, few observers were willing to follow Leroy-Beaulieu when he claimed that Jews and Catholics faced similar challenges. Today, as liberals’ faith in progress and the modern state comes under increasing scrutiny and as the conflicts between liberals and Catholics have been all but put to rest, it is time to rethink this connection once again.