Robert Solomon Wistrich

It is generally recognized that antisemitism as a modern ideology and as an organized political movement first emerged in Europe in the latter half of the 19th century. There is, however, far less agreement as to the nature and cause of this phenomenon, the significance of the term 'antisemitism' itself and to what extent it can be seen as expressing a coherent world-view, let alone a consistent policy or platform – at least in the conventional framework of 19th-century political parties. If by 'ideology' we imply the search for a total explanation of history and society, a system of belief which, without necessarily being 'rational', seeks to account for fundamental changes in the world and, more specifically, to articulate the sense of an existing or impending social crisis, then antisemitism can indeed be included under this heading. By the end of the 19th century, without always assuming the form of a systematic philosophy, antisemitism had nonetheless become a recognizable *Weltanschauung* – an interconnected way of thinking, feeling and acting in the world, a distinctive cultural code and at the same time a vehicle for the expression of all kinds of economic and political grievances.

I shall be concerned here both with the process of crystallization of this 'ideology' and with its origins and content as well as with some of its party political manifestations as they emerged in the 1880s and 1890s. In particular, I want to examine how far

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modern antisemitism, in its early phases (i.e., before 1900) was a movement of the left or right, radical or conservative – or whether it belongs to some more heterogeneous, hybrid category. In attempting to answer this question my angle of approach will be to examine its credentials as a species of radicalism and to consider in what ways it derives from, resembles and differs from other 'leftist' ideologies in 19th-century Europe.

For this purpose it is also necessary to consider briefly the earlier part of the 19th century – before the term *antisemitism* with all its ambiguities and subsequent associations had become a fixed part of the European political vocabulary – and before the movement itself that fostered this ideology had been definitively absorbed into the whole cultural matrix of *fin-de-siècle* nationalism, *völkisch* racism, conservatism and aggressive imperialism, especially in Germany and Austria-Hungary. In considering antisemitism as a form of political radicalism, in re-examining its *social* dimension and its claims to have been a vehicle for anti-establishment protest, I do not, of course, wish to deny the strong elements of traditional-conservative Christian and medieval influences that were inherent both in the genesis of the ideology and in the mass organizations that it subsequently produced. Thus, in predominantly Catholic countries such as France and Austria there is no doubt that believing Catholics provided the bulk of the leadership and the main support for the 19th-century antisemitic parties as well as contributing to the elaboration of the ideology – although the Berlin movement in Germany – the first example of organized political antisemitism – was founded and led by the Protestant court-preacher, Adolf Stoecker. But even here, theological concerns played only a secondary role. Moreover, in the Christian-Social movement of the 1880s and 1890s in Germany, Austria and France, it is significant that it was predominantly the urban lower middle classes, the peasantry and the lower clergy rather than the ecclesiastical hierarchy which provided wholehearted support for antisemitism – while the leadership from Adolf Stoecker in Germany to Karl Lueger in Austria or the Abbé Garnier in France exploited all the resources of radical populist, anticapitalistic demagogy to revive the fortunes of the Church in an era of rapid dechristianization, secularism and rampant anticlericalism.

While it is true that Catholic and Protestant antisemites in the late 19th century maintained all the traditional religious accusations against the Jews – e.g., diatribes against the Talmud, deicide and blood libel charges (especially potent in Eastern Europe and the Habsburg Empire) even these medieval superstitions owed their power to essentially *modern* techniques of mass agitation and to the crisis of insecurity, afflicting lower middle-class rural and urban strata whose imminent proletarization made them more receptive to such demagogy. What was novel and significant about Lueger's Christian-Social Party in Austria was precisely the way it

blended such indigenous clerical traditions of Judeophobia as had existed for centuries with concrete *social* protest – with the revolt of the Viennese *Spiessbürger* in the 1880s against liberalism, high finance and the so-called *Judenherrschaft*. The subsequent Habsburg, loyalist and Catholic 'traditionalist' image of Karl Lueger – once he had conquered Vienna in 1897 – should not disguise the social radicalism which made it possible for him in the first place to successfully mobilize the mass of small-scale producers, craftsmen, tradesmen and shopkeepers in the Austro-Hungarian capital. Lueger's cynical exploitation of what his liberal rival Ferdinand Kronawetter called 'the socialism of fools', in order to win political power was so successful not only because of favorable local conditions and his own charismatic leadership (though these were important factors) – but also because Christian-Social antisemitism so perfectly expressed the vacillating radicalism of the Viennese *Kleinbürger*. It was both *anti-capitalist* (against the modern manufacturing methods pioneered in Austria by Jewish entrepreneurs, which were indeed swamping skilled craftsmen and small business), *anti-liberal* (the Jews were invariably seen as the backbone of the liberal establishment in Austria) and *anti-immigrant*, i.e., directed against the unwelcome competition of poor immigrant Jewish pedlars from Galicia, Hungary and Russia.

In addition Christian-Socialism in Vienna held out the promise of a more democratic social-political order which would protect the interests of the 'little man' against a narrow and unrepresentative liberal-capitalist oligarchy. The ideology on which Lueger's Christian Socialism was based, as formulated by Karl Freiherr von Vogelsang two decades earlier, did admittedly contain strong conservative, neo-feudal elements with its dream of a corporatist society, a restoration of the guilds and its emphasis on the Catholic prohibition of 'usury' as well as in its attack on the materialist, anti-clerical and subversive ethos of modern bourgeois civilization. Yet even here, in the aristocratic critique of social atomism, *laissez-faire* capitalism and the so-called 'Jewish Spirit', there are parallels with the young Marx that not only von Vogelsang but even some of the Austro-Marxist theoreticians, such as Karl Renner and Otto Bauer, pointed out.

While it is undeniable that many Catholic antisemites frequently expressed a romantic *anti-modernist* outlook similar to von Vogelsang in Austria or La Tour de Pin in France as a reaction to the growth of the industrial civilization – dreaming of a pre-capitalist way of life or expressing nostalgia for the dissolution of the traditional Christian order – this was not necessarily incompatible with social radicalism. Many Social Democrats, especially in Germany, where after 1880 the working classes were more effectively mobilized against the antisemitic groups – tended to dismiss the 'radicalism' of the antisemites as a backward-looking utopian fol-

ly, directed to the past, not the future. They were sometimes compared to the machine-breaking Luddites or anarchists, depicted as primitive rebels or as homeless, uprooted, dispossessed strata, who had failed to grasp the dialectics of social change or the significance of technological development. Marxian socialism, especially as it developed in Germany after 1880, proudly regarded itself (and its evaluation has been accepted by many historians) as standing at the opposite pole of the political world to the antisemites – as an optimistic emancipatory creed which shared the liberal belief in education, progress and inter-racial tolerance and at the same time as an internationalist revolutionary movement based on class identification and opposed to all forms of national or religious discrimination. Antisemitism, as Peter Pulzer has written, was 'concerned not with more emancipation but with less, with the interests of traditional, not of new classes, with the primacy of the national and the integral over the universal'. There is some truth in this basic distinction, especially with regard to Bismarckian and Wilhelminian Germany, but it is certainly not universally valid and it unjustifiably assumes an *a priori*, inborn immunity to antisemitism within the Socialist movement. Moreover, it underestimates the social and political radicalism of the antisemites. In both Austria-Hungary and France, where they organized a more formidable political movement than in the Second Reich, the antisemites could nourish themselves on a radical leftist tradition and even in Germany before 1880 one can observe a similar phenomenon.

Nor is it an adequate explanation to present modern antisemitism simply as a reaction to the economic depression after 1873 or to the political crisis of post-1879 liberalism in Germany. The corollary view propounded by Reinhard Rürup that modern antisemitism is essentially 'a post-emancipation phenomenon' directed by its proponents 'against an influential powerful Jewry at the very centre of that society' is also somewhat misleading, taking too literally the claims of the antisemites themselves. While plausibly seeing the decline of bourgeois liberalism in Central Europe in the 1870s as a crucial turning point in the emergence of modern political antisemitism, this approach does not adequately explain *why* the Jews were selected as scapegoats to explain the stock-exchange crash of 1873, the socio-economic crisis of capitalism and backlash against liberal political culture. The implication in Rürup's argument appears to be that in Berlin at least, the Jews really were *the* representatives of capitalist economy and culture and that therefore German antisemites were perhaps justified in regarding themselves as the organizers of a 'defensive movement' opposed to 'Jewish rule'. Certainly many contemporaries did see the new antisemitism of the 1870s as just such a movement against Jewish 'domination' in cultural and economic life, as did their imitators in Austria and France a few years later. On this point

conservative, Catholic, radical and even socialist critics of 'Manchester' liberalism could unite. However what is interesting here is that although it was the radical antisemites who made the running in the 1880s, the clerical conservative elements reaped the fruits in the following decade, absorbing and 'recuperating' the benefits of antisemitism in the service of their own class interests.

Otto Glagau, the petit-bourgeois German pamphleteer, who initiated the new assault on 'Jewry' in the 1870s as 'applied Manchesterism carried to extremes' and called for emancipation *from* the Jews, was a classic representative of the earlier radical tradition along with his fellow journalist Wilhelm Marr – the German originator in 1879 of the novel political concept anti-*Semitism*. Along with other initially obscure publicists of the 19th century who created a *succès de scandale* with their revelations (like Drumont in France and August Röhling in Austria), they gave a sensational journalistic expression to anti-Jewish feelings that were already apparent in the public as a reaction to the stock-market crash and the general climate of social aggression and overheated nationalism. Glagau's originality was to explicitly identify the Jewish question with the social question and to rouse the embittered German *Mittelstand* with his revelations concerning the stock-exchange swindles of the *Gründerzeit*. There are more than a few echoes of Karl Marx in Glagau's denunciation of the cash-nexus, the bourse-wolves, the plight of the ruined artisan class and the iniquities of 'Manchester liberalism'. In identifying the Jewish merchant and banker with *homo capitalisticus*, Glagau and other radical antisemites of the 1870s were in fact continuing the tradition of Marx's *Zur Judenfrage*, admittedly without the intellectual sophistication of Hegelian dialectics – just as Edward Drumont in France could draw on the anti-Jewish writings of early 19th-century utopian socialists such as Fourier, Toussenel and Proudhon.

Admittedly there were some important differences – Marx defended the principle of Jewish civil rights within bourgeois society even while calling for the emancipation of humanity from 'Judaism' – whereas Otto Glagau and his disciples were primarily interested in the social and national liberation of 'Christian' Germans. Moreover, Marx's anti-Judaism did not utilize the naturalistic imagery derived from the biological sciences already in vogue by the 1870s but not widely current thirty years earlier. Furthermore, Marx's concept of Jewish parasitism, like that of Fourier and Toussenel in France, remained social rather than racial. The Jews were never viewed by Marx and his disciples as an alien *Volkskörper* (racial body) corroding the national organism in the sense that Glagau, Marr and Dühring – the leaders of radical German antisemitism and the néo-Lassallean agitator, Wilhelm Hasselmann, maintained. For Marx, they were still 'Jews' rather than '*Semites*', bearers of the commercial ethos that had infiltrated

the Christian world rather than a nomadic malevolent *Volk* which aimed at imposing its racial domination over the Germans whether through the banks, the stock exchange, the state or the political parties.

But these differences should not obscure the fact that there is a line of continuity between the anti-Judaism of the Young Hegelians in the early 1840s and the emergence of the new antisemitism in Germany three decades later – just as there is a connection between the early socialist *anti-juif* movement in France and the antisemitic politics of Drumont, Barrès and Guérin in the 1890s.

One important link in this chain was the radical tradition of anticlericalism, which goes back to the French *philosophes* of the 18th century. It was from this background that Wilhelm Marr himself emerged and it is not surprising that he so vehemently denied that his antisemitism was motivated by *confessioneller Hass*. As a veteran revolutionary of 1848, an ex-radical democrat convinced by his reading of Voltaire, Feuerbach and Daumer that monotheism was 'a malady of human consciousness' and the root of all tyranny and evil, Wilhelm Marr's antisemitism was also virulently anti-Catholic. Together with Eugen Dühring, himself a former socialist and the most influential ideologist of radical antisemitism in Central Europe in the 1880s, Wilhelm Marr believed that no Christian could be a genuine antisemite because Christianity was itself based on and corrupted by Jewish racial tradition. This was a logical enough development of Marr's earlier radical negation of monotheistic religion – an evolution paralleled in France by the Blanquist socialists and continued in Germany by Eugen Dühring and Theodor Fritsch. In his socialist phase, Dühring already presented Christianity as a doctrine which negated the life-force and had sundered man from nature, sapping his vitality and spontaneous attachment to his native land. Within a few years, Dühring, by this time a determined opponent of the Marxist labour movement, was calling for the complete emancipation of the modern 'Aryan' peoples from the Judeo-Christian yoke – basing his argument for the renewal of German culture on the radical repudiation of both the Old and the New Testaments.

The *völkisch* anti-Christian antisemitic tradition in 19th-century Germany and Austria embodied by Theodor Fritsch, Otto Boeckel and Georg von Schoenerer followed in Dühring's wake and found expression in a plebeian populist agitation that claimed to be above party and religious denominations. The social radicalism of Otto Boeckel's Hessian peasant movement in the late 1880s, which was typical of this trend, went hand in hand with a racist, neo-pagan *Blut und Boden* romanticism, denunciations of Jews, Junkers and clerics as well as with serious efforts to establish producer and consumer self-help organizations in the Hessian countryside to eliminate the Jewish middleman and trader. Boeckel's

Antisemitische Volkspartei, which won a number of parliamentary seats in the 1890s, expressed a radical plebeian revolt against the existing parliamentary system in the Second Reich, against metropolitan Berlin culture, big business, the world of industry, the Jews and the Prussian aristocracy. Boeckel's anti-modernist nostalgia admittedly embodied the conservative side of modern German antisemitism – its romantic *völkisch* aspirations for a pre-industrial culture; but as a follower of Glagau and Dühring who totally rejected the Judeo-Christian outlook and defended *Mittelstand* interests against the Junkers, capitalists and Jews, Boeckel was undoubtedly a populist radical. Even the title of one of his best-known pamphlets, *Die Juden – Die Könige unsere Zeit* (1887), which *inter alia* attacked the Rothschilds, consciously recalled the famous work by the French socialist Toussenel written in 1845 – *Les Juifs – Rois de l'Époque.*

Georg von Schönerer in Austria stood even more clearly in the radical camp as the undisputed leader of the leftist opposition in the Habsburg Monarchy during the early 1880s. His populist attacks on the Austrian Rothschilds in 1884 accusing them of transport usury (a campaign denounced by the liberal *Neue Freie Presse* as 'communistic') was the high point of his career as the anti-capitalist *Führer* of the masses. Von Schönerer at this time still enjoyed the support of the future leaders of Austrian Social Democracy, Victor Adler and Engelbert Pernerstorfer, as well as of the Christian Socialists Karl Lueger and Ernst Schneider, not to mention the Pan-German nationalists. Anti-liberalism, anti-capitalism and anti-clericalism were the unifying threads in von Schoenerer's national-socialist ideology expressed in the Linz Programme of 1882, formulated with the help of two assimilated Jews – Heinrich Friedjung and Victor Adler. Von Schoenerer's anti-capitalist rhetoric in favour of productive classes, the call for universal suffrage, a progressive income tax, a tax on stock-exchange transactions, the nationalizing of railways and insurance companies, the limitation of working hours (and the subsequent addition in 1885 of the notorious *Judenpunkt* – calling for the removal of Jewish influence from all areas of public life regarded as 'indispensable for realizing these reforms') were typical enough of quasi-socialist, antisemitic populism in this period. Calls for social reform and democratization of the political system went hand in hand with nationalism and a growing emphasis on the racial gulf between 'Aryan' and Jew, fused together in a militant anti-liberal platform. Significantly, von Schoenerer, like Marr in Germany, saw himself as the descendant of the radical generation of 1848 with its republican, anti-clerical, romantic nationalist ideals. He called for the destruction of the Catholic Church and Jesuit influence as well as for an end to the 'Semitic' domination of banking, credit institutions and the press in accordance with the Pan-German slogan *Ohne Juda ohne Rom wird gebaut*

Germaniens Dom. The radical racist dynamic behind Austrian Pan-Germanism, evident in von Schoenerer's insistence on the eternal, biological necessity of combatting the Jew clearly influenced German national-socialism as Adolf Hitler openly stated in *Mein Kampf* just as (in a different way) Lueger's ability to organize the Catholic petit-bourgeois masses in Vienna, his grasp of the social question and his tactical flair shaped the young Hitler's views on propaganda. It was from these pre-war Austrian models that Hitler learned the *political* significance of antisemitism as a weapon for mobilizing the masses against one enemy which could simultaneously symbolize both liberalism, capitalism, socialism and the supra-national state.

This type of radical antisemitism did not simply involve a traditional religious rejection of Jews and Judaism but also a negation of Christianity itself, of capitalism, of parliamentarism and frequently of 'modernism' as a whole. Its ideological development appears to have coincided with a general socio-economic, religious and political crisis in European society. The antisemites claimed, of course, to be reacting purely to the 'Jewish peril' and advocated all kinds of measures for banning Jewish immigrants, reducing or abolishing Jewish employment in certain professions (especially public office), for withdrawing citizenship and restoring the ghetto, encouraging the expropriation of Jewish fortunes, favouring repatriation or even physical elimination of the Jews. But much of this agitation in Western and Central Europe as opposed to the pogromist barbarism of Tsarist Russia remained at a purely verbal level – however violent the rhetoric. The 'fantasy' element was strong in this 19th-century genre of plebeian anti-semitism and its mythical quality (transcending theological hatred of Jews which sounded medieval and reactionary) was strengthened by the new emphasis on 'race' – a concept which conveniently lent itself to all kinds of mystification in spite of its modern 'scientific' ring. The very abstractness of the antisemitic 'ideology' – itself largely a creation of semi-radicalized, frustrated intellectual misfits and some sensation-mongering journalists – succeeded in activating the sense of an *ideal*, world beyond the social atomization, the class antagonisms and decadence of contemporary bourgeois society. The diffuse radicalism expressed by this antisemitic mythology offered a kind of anchor for the psychologically unhinged, the economically insecure, the social misfits, the unemployed intellectuals, the bankrupt aristocrats, as well as serving the material interests of the 'respectable' professional middle-classes, suddenly confronted by unwelcome Jewish competition.

As the French Catholic writer Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu put it, antisemitism was as much the socialism of 'snobs' and 'clubmen' as of the 'fools' (to use the Marxist formula), in France, as in Austria and Germany; already in *fin de siècle* Europe it proved its potential

efficacy in bringing together the aristocracy and the mob, the men of capital and the honest labouring artisans, the peasants and the disaffected, culturally disorientated *Mittelstand* in a national front against the alleged domination of an 'alien' race. It was this social functionality of antisemitism along with its *protean* quality and ability to fuse with a whole series of other views which among other things distinguished it from traditional Jew-hatred and gave it a distinctively modern quality. By the 1890s it had clearly emerged as an identifiable world-view, as an ideology and a political movement able to compete with conservatism, liberalism or socialism – one, moreover with its own quasi-apocalyptic view of social reality and its own peculiar methods of operation. On the one hand it exuded a brutal simplicity and aggressive demagogy which was part of its strength while at the same time the social radicalism which had made it potentially dangerous and unacceptable to bourgeois society was masked and effectively neutralized by the willingness of respectable establishment figures and political organizations to sponsor its aims. It was not the noisy, unstable radicals like Marr, Glagau, Boeckel, Ahlwardt, Fritsch or von Schoenerer who made antisemitism *salonfähig* in Germany and Austria, but the conservative nationalists like Heinrich von Treitschke, Protestant clerics like Adolf Stoecker or Catholic aristocrats like Freiherr von Vogelsang and Prince von Liechtenstein. Needless to say, the task of integrating antisemitism into the mainstream of Central European culture was greatly facilitated by the long list of illustrious German thinkers and artists from Luther, Kant, Goethe and Fichte to Hegel, Feuerbach, Schopenhauer and Richard Wagner whose derogatory views of Jews and Judaism could be called upon and were in fact utilized to justify antisemitic opinions in the second half of the 19th century.

In France the tradition of literary antisemitism was no less distinguished than in Germany and also contributed its share towards making the new ideology socially respectable by the end of the century. Indeed in France antisemitism had been indigenous to the rationalist, anti-clerical and socialist traditions from the beginning of the 19th century, giving it an intellectual prestige that it did not initially enjoy in other countries. The Voltairean contempt for the Jews (with its dual attack on the inherently debased character of the race and on the iniquities of Judeo-Christian monotheism) and the Fourierist onslaught against commercialism, mercantile parasitism and the Jewish 'usury' gave a modern, secular edge to French antisemitism well before 1848. Proudhon's visceral diatribes 'against this race which poisons everything, by meddling everywhere without ever joining itself to another people' or his call for the abolition of this cult (Judaism) – 'One must send this race back to Asia or exterminate it' – make even Marx's more extreme remarks on the subject seem like a model of cool objectivity. For all his anti-clericalism, Proudhon felt

obliged to point out that it is not for nothing that the Christians called them (i.e., the Jews) 'deicides' – and his teaching that *'la haine du juif, comme de l'anglais, doit être un article de notre foi politique'* was readily absorbed by many French socialists in the 19th century.

The socialist tradition of Fourier, Proudhon and Blanqui appears to have digested the medieval popular feeling against the Jews as usurers into its mainstream, helped no doubt by the prominence of the Rothschilds and a number of other Jews (and Protestants) in the French banking oligarchy.

Indeed, modern antisemitism in France first developed primarily as an offshoot of the early radical attack on the *féodalité financière* – the new financial plutocracy, which had established its hegemony under the bourgeois Orleanist Monarchy (1830–48). The French socialist stereotype of the Jew as the incarnation of Mammon and the mercantile spirit retained a noticeably Christian tinge in the writings of Fourier, Proudhon, Pierre Leroux and Alphonse Toussenel. The latter's book *Les Juifs, Rois de l'Époque* directly related the iniquities of the Protestant capitalist ethic to 'biblical' morality and 'Jewish' racial traits – particularly those exemplified by cosmopolitan Jewish financiers – in such a way that Edouard Drumont had a ready model before him when he came to compose *La France Juive*, forty years later. Not for nothing did Drumont refer to the 'wonderful book' of the Fourierist disciple, Alphonse Toussenel, 'the work of a poet, of a thinker, of a prophet' and declare his sole ambition to be that his own work would stand alongside it 'in the libraries of those who would understand the causes which have brought ruin and shame to our country'. In Toussenel's work one can indeed see one of the primary sources of modern French antisemitism which was admiringly quoted not only by Drumont but also by the integral socialists who contributed to Benoit Malon's *Le Révue Socialiste* in the 1880s and by the integral nationalists around *Action Française* in the 1900s. They all shared Toussenel's hatred of *la haute banque*, of the unproductive middleman and merchant, of 'Judaism', Protestantism, laissez-faire and Anglo-Saxon capitalism.

No less significant is the fact that a section of the French socialist movement should have been so receptive to the 'Aryan' myth which had been first developed in France during the 1850s primarily by aristocratic and liberal-bourgeois scholars like Comte de Gobineau and Ernst Renan. Already in Proudhon one can find examples of this racist antisemitism where he writes that the Jew 'is the evil element, Satan, Ahriman, incarnated in the race of Shem'. Proudhon had, for example, argued in *De la justice dans la révolution et dans l'église* (1858) that 'monotheism is a creation of the Indo-Germanic spirit, and could not have arisen from any other source'. Elsewhere he blamed the Jews, this *'race insociable, obstinée, infernale'* for that *'superstition malfaisante'* called

Catholicism – it was the influence of the 'Jewish' element which (following Voltaire) Proudhon held responsible for Christian intolerance and fanaticism. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that the racist diatribes in Proudhon were grafted on almost as an appendix to justify his visceral hatred of Judaism. Significantly enough, this racist streak was shared by the Russian revolutionary anarchist Mikhail Bakunin who expressed an even more paranoic view of the Jews than Proudhon, calling them 'an exploiting sect, a bloodsucking people, a unique devouring parasite, tightly and intimately organized...' Bakunin shared Proudhon's primitivist view that only peasants and workmen were real producers as well as his bitter hatred of Marx and Marxism – pointing out that 'the communism of Marx wants a mighty centralization by the state, and where this exists there must nowadays be a central State Bank and where such a bank exists, the parasitical Jewish nation, which speculates on the labour of the peoples, will always find a means to sustain itself'.

On the issue of Jewish 'parasitism', it would paradoxically appear that Bakunin's Russian revolutionary populism, Proudhon's French anarchism and early German Marxism could find some common ground. What however made the French socialists particularly susceptible to this type of anticapitalistic antisemitism was the dramatic predominance of the *haute banque* in French economic and political life in the first half of the 19th century. The combination of this fact with the extensiveness of *petit bourgeois* enterprise in France, its predominantly agrarian peasant Catholic culture and the lack of a sophisticated economic theory to compare with mature Marxism, made it easier to equate the Jew with the capitalist and with the updated traditional, Christian image of the usurer. For most French radicals as for the mass of shopkeepers, artisans and workers, the Rothschilds remained the embodiment of big capital and the entire propaganda against banking capital in France was thus easily diverted into antisemitic channels. Among some of the Blanquists this hostility towards the Jew as the incarnation of swindling, usury and rapacity was still further intensified by their acceptance of the 'Aryan' myth and of 'Semitic' inferiority. The violently anticlerical trend within French socialism took on, moreover, pathological proportions in the work of the French Blanquist Gustave Tridon, (notably in his *Du Molochisme Juif*) who even accused the biblical Jews of cannibalism and originating human sacrifice. This was a malevolent charge already to be found in Voltaire and also in the writings of some of the left Hegelian radicals in Germany such as Friedrich Daumer and Ghillany. But it was left to the Blanquist socialists to demonstrate that the prime task of modernity and of revolutionary radicalism was to sweep away the last particle of *'l'esprit Sémitique'* from the face of the earth.

What had distinguished France from both Germany and Austria

was that antisemitism, at least until 1885, came mainly from the socialist camp and that even after Edouard Drumont's emergence it still retained its leftist character and its anticapitalist pretensions for considerably longer. As recently pointed out by Professor Zeev Sternhell, the synthesis accomplished in the 1890s by ideologists of the calibre of Drumont and Barrès, by radical polemicists like Henri Rochefort and agitators like de Morès and Jules Guérin was to fuse the socialist with the populist-Catholic and above all with the nationalist current in French antisemitism and to make it the most sophisticated politico-cultural conceptualization of Judeophobia achieved anywhere in Europe in the 19th century. It was to take another thirty years before the full destructive potential of this 'radical' 19th-century ideology was to become apparent – not in Paris – its original laboratory and intellectual seedplot but in Munich, Berlin and Vienna, as a central plank in the National Socialist onslaught against liberal-bourgeois democracy and the Marxist labour movement. The dynamic role played by antisemitism in the ideological political synthesis represented by German Nazism would however have been inconceivable without the radical intellectual framework which first developed in the womb of the declining bourgeois society of *fin-de-siècle* Europe.

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