3

Reactive Anti-Semitism in the Late Roman Empire

Group strategies are very powerful in competition with individual strategies within a society, and especially so in the case of Judaism. The power of the Jewish group strategy has derived from: (1) cultural and eugenic practices that produced a highly talented, intelligent, and educated elite able to improve the fortunes of the entire group; (2) universal Jewish education resulting in an average resource acquisition ability of the entire group above that of the rest of the society; and (3) high levels of within-group cooperation and altruism typically enforced by social controls within the Jewish community.

There is good theoretical reason to suppose that a heightened sense of group identity would be the response to the presence of a group that is itself strongly ethnocentric. From the perspective of gentiles, the social identity perspective summarized in Chapter 1 implies that the presence of a cohesive, distinctive outgroup (i.e., the Jews) would result in a heightened salience of ingroup (i.e., gentile) identification and corresponding devaluation of the outgroup. In situations of external threat, group members close ranks and increase their cohesiveness and group solidarity. Negative stereotypes regarding the outgroup are developed, and there are cognitive biases such that negative information about the outgroup is preferentially attended to and points of disagreement highlighted. Supporting this point, LeVine and Campbell (1972) note instances in which feelings of ingroup loyalty and outgroup hostility occurred only after the appearance of a colonial power. The analogy with Judaism as a minority group within a host society is clear: resource competition between impermeable groups results in a situation where self-justificatory racialist or other forms of separatist ideology proliferate on both sides of the group divide.[1]

The extent to which such tendencies are influenced by evolved mechanisms is an important question (see Chapter 1) but not crucial to the issue. The point here is that the empirical evidence clearly indicates that resource competition

between groups results in greater solidarity, cohesion, and group identity among members of both ingroup and outgroup. Indeed, it has often been observed that Jewish groups become more cohesive and Jewish identification more powerful in times of crisis to the group, and there is evidence that Jewish groups become more authoritarian and collectivist during times of stress or between-group resource competition (see Chapter 1 and *PTSDA*, Chs. 7, 8). The implication is that gentiles would react in a similar manner to perceived group conflict.

The development of a stronger sense of group identity among gentiles then facilitates competition with the group strategy of Judaism. Whereas previously the society was seen as a relatively homogeneous whole, the society now comes to be perceived as being made up of impermeable groups in competition with each other. Group membership becomes critical for individual success. Battle lines are drawn between groups, with the result that individuals are seen primarily in terms of whether they are members of one's ingroup or an outgroup. If it is not possible to out-compete the outgroup, other means are used: quotas are imposed, restrictions on entering occupations are legislated, or, in the extreme, there is outright persecution, expulsion, or civil war.

It is an important proposition of this and the following two chapters that these gentile groups come to resemble Judaism in certain critical ways, that they become in effect mirror images of Judaism. Under circumstances in which a genetically and culturally segregated ethnic group engages in successful resource competition, the only available means of competition for outgroup members would be to abandon individualistic strategies and become members of a cohesive, strategizing group. Since the group strategy of Judaism has often been perceived to be economically and culturally dominant, the best means of advancing outgroup members' interests may to adopt a group strategy that resembles in critical ways the fundamentally collectivist, exclusionary structure of Judaism. Such a mirror-image gentile group strategy is therefore a reactive process, since the heightened sense of group identity among gentiles develops in reaction to the group strategy of another group.

We have seen that Western societies, perhaps uniquely among the stratified societies of the world, tend toward individualism (Chapter 2; *PTSDA*, Ch. 8). Such societies tend toward universalism and assimilation of ethnic groups. People in individualist cultures show relatively little emotional attachment to ingroups and are more likely to behave in a pro-social, altruistic manner to strangers. People in individualist cultures also tend to be less aware of ingroup/outgroup boundaries and thus tend not to have highly negative attitudes toward outgroup members (Triandis 1991, 80).

The expectation is that individualists will tend to be less predisposed to anti-Semitism and more likely to blame any offensive Jewish behavior on individual Jews rather than see it as confirming negative stereotypes true of all Jews. Individualist societies are therefore expected to be the ideal environment for Judaism as a highly collectivist group strategy.[2] The proposal here is that as Judaism becomes increasingly successful, gentiles, even in Western societies,

are increasingly willing to abandon individualism and submerge themselves in highly collectivist, authoritarian groups. These cohesive, authoritarian, collectivist gentile groups then serve as instruments of competition against Judaism.

In this chapter I will discuss the development of corporate Catholicism in the late Roman Empire from this perspective, and the following two chapters will continue these themes in discussions of the Iberian Inquisitions and the rise of National Socialism in Germany.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CORPORATE CATHOLICISM IN THE LATE ROMAN EMPIRE

> [Jews are] murderers of the Lord, assassins of the prophets, rebels against God, God haters, . . . advocates of the devil, race of vipers, slanderers, calumniators, dark-minded people, leaven of the Pharisees, sanhedrin of demons, sinners, wicked men, stoners, and haters of righteousness. (St. Gregory of Nyssa; in Lazar 1991a, 47)

> If you call [the synagogue] a brothel, a den of vice, the devil's refuge, Satan's fortress, a place to deprave the soul, an abyss of every conceivable disaster or whatever else you will, you are still saying less than it deserves. (St Jerome; in Michael 1994, 120)

> [Judaism is] ever . . . mighty in wickedness . . . when it cursed Moses; when it hated God; when it vowed its sons to demons; when it killed the prophets, and finally when it betrayed to the Praetor and crucified our God Himself and Lord. . . . And so glorying through all its existence in iniquity. (Hillary of Poitiers; in Michael 1994, 110)

> Although such beasts [Jews] are unfit for work, they are fit for killing . . . fit for slaughter. (I.II.5)
> [the Synagogue] is not merely a lodging place for robbers and cheats but also for demons. This is true not only of the synagogues but also of the souls of the Jews. (I.IV.2)
> Shall I tell you of their plundering, their covetousness, their abandonment of the poor, their thefts, their cheating in trade? (I.VII.1) (St. John Chrysostom, *Adversus Judaeos*)

The first of these putative gentile group strategies is the most problematic. Nevertheless, it is worth considering the possibility that anti-Semitism played a prominent role in the development of hegemonic, corporate Catholicism in the late Roman Empire. Because of the scantiness of the historical record, this evidence is by no means overwhelming, but it is useful to describe the powerful overtones of anti-Semitism that accompanied the establishment of the corporate, collectivist social structure characteristic of the late Roman Empire.

The view developed here is highly compatible with the proposal of several historians that the establishment of the Christian church represented a qualitative shift from the anti-Semitism typical of the ancient world. The mutual

hostilities between Jews and gentiles in the ancient world involved the "normal" mutual animosity between groups with differing interests (Parkes 1976, 5; Ruether 1974). As expected in individualist societies, anti-Semitic violence in the ancient world was sporadic and decentralized, resulting from particular situations in particular areas. With the advent of the Christian church, however, anti-Semitism became based on a powerful, emotionally compelling ideology and was institutionalized in an organization that aspired to and often possessed a great deal of political power. I propose that the Christian church in late antiquity was in its very essence the embodiment of a powerful anti-Semitic movement that arose because of gentile concern with resource and reproductive competition with Jews.

Other views have been proposed. Feldman (1993, 383ff) and Simon (1986, 232) interpret the intense anti-Semitism among the 4th- and 5th-century Church fathers as resulting from purely institutional competition between two universalist religions competing for converts and social dominance—what I will term the "institutional rivalry" hypothesis. These authors dismiss resource and reproductive competition between culturally and genetically segregated groups as completely irrelevant. The implication is that but for a completely inexplicable turn of fate (Constantine's conversion), Judaism rather than Christianity might have been institutionalized within the Roman Empire.

The institutional rivalry argument depends on either of two highly problematic propositions: (1) that there were large-scale conversions of gentiles to Judaism in the 4th century, so that Judaism was perceived by the Church as "a real and dangerous rival" (Simon 1986, 271); or (2) that ecclesiastical anti-Semitism was directed at large numbers of Christian "Judaizers" who, though they did not necessarily become Jews, showed "the power of Jewish beliefs, and especially of Jewish rites, to draw an important minority of Christians from the very bosom of the Church" (Simon 1986, 232).

Regarding the first proposition, the overwhelming picture from the ancient world is one of Jewish ambivalence toward proselytes and low numbers of actual proselytes (see *PTSDA*, Ch. 4). Simon (1986, 279–280) himself comes up with only eight names of gentile proselytes (seven of whom were scholars) in the entire period from A.D. 135 to the end of the 4th century, and he is unable to mention the name of a single Jewish missionary or missionary tract. He also acknowledges that Jewish missionary activity was considerably less intense and less effective than Christian missionary activity (p. 279). Moreover, the material summarized below indicates that the perception that the Jews were a biological descent group and not simply a religion appears to have been common among the Church fathers and is apparent in the wording of imperial legislation. It is therefore unlikely that Judaism was perceived as a universalist religion by gentiles during this period.

Pakter (1992, 716) points out that immediately prior to the rise of Christianity as the state religion, it was Christianity, not Judaism, that was viewed as a threat to classical Roman culture (thus provoking the persecutions of Diocletian),

because of the aggressive proselytism of the former compared to the very limited proselytism of the latter. Judaism was viewed as a threat to the state only after the Empire became Christianized—a finding that is consistent with the present interpretation that anti-Semitism was fundamental to Christianity as it emerged in the late Empire. The proposal that Judaism was an aggressive, universalist rival of Christianity must argue that Judaism suddenly became transformed in this manner after Christianity had become the state religion. There is no evidence for such a view.

Feldman (1993) has brought this argument up to date. His most convincing data for the possibility of large-scale conversions during this period is the "insistent and repetitive" (p. 442) concern in the imperial legislation about Jews converting and circumcising gentile slaves. There is no question that Jews owned gentile slaves during this period—indeed, Jews dominated the slave trade (Juster 1914). Feldman points out that the circumcision of slaves was a Jewish religious law at least partly for ritual reasons (circumcision enabled slaves to perform their duties, such as handling food, in a manner consistent with Jewish religious law) but undergoing this procedure did not mean that the slaves had been converted to Judaism.

It is interesting that the language of the laws shows a concern that gentiles not be in a position of subordination to Jews and perhaps, in the case of females, subject to sexual exploitation. According to the Theodosian Code (16.9.5) (A.D. 423), "no Jew shall dare to purchase Christian slaves. For We consider it abominable[3] that the very religious slaves should be defiled by the ownership of very impious purchasers." In his *Life of Constantine* (p. 547), Eusebius never mentions the conversion of slaves as a problem but emphasizes that "it could not be right that those whom the Saviour had ransomed should be subjected to the yoke of slavery by a people who had slain the prophets and the Lord himself." The manifest concern is domination of Christians by a different people, not the loss of Christians to a universalist Judaism. Referring to late Roman legislation, Cohen (1994, 65) notes that "Christian sources simmer with deep-seated fear of Jewish power over Christians and of the Judaization of pagans or Christians come into the service of Jews."

Moreover, gentile slaves of Jews would not have been allowed to contribute to the Jewish gene pool (see *PTSDA*, Chs. 2, 4) and were not in fact full-fledged members of the Jewish community. According to Jewish religious law, slaves would be removed from the gentile community and be subjected to a variety of Jewish religious practices, including circumcision, without truly entering the Jewish community.[4] Christian hostility toward Jewish enslavement of Christians is therefore not reasonably interpreted as resulting from a concern that these Christians would actually become Jews. Jewish practices regarding slaves do not indicate that Judaism was a universalist religion intent on adding these gentiles to the Jewish community. Indeed, slavery presents an ideal opportunity for one-way gene flow, from the Jewish to the gentile community but not the reverse.

The prohibitions on circumcising slaves and owning Christian slaves that emerged in the 4th and 5th centuries can easily be seen as an aspect of the rising walls of separation between Jews and gentiles during the period consequent to increased resource and reproductive competition, rather than as a sign that the gentile world as a whole was in danger of becoming converted to Judaism. Similarly, in later periods it was common for Jews to be prohibited from employing Christians as domestic servants or wet nurses, at least partly because of the possibility of sexual exploitation, but also because such a situation would result in a position of Jewish dominance over gentiles. Laws against Jews having Muslim slaves, and especially female Muslim slaves, were also common in the Muslim world (Patai & Patai 1989, 126), and there is some indication that a source of group hostility in the period of the Inquisition was gentile resentment that Jews and Conversos had access to gentile women as servants, mistresses, or concubines (see Appendix to Chapter 7). Indeed, concern with Jews controlling gentile females is a recurrent theme of Jewish-gentile group conflict throughout history, occurring also in the Christian Middle Ages (see Ch. 4), National Socialist Germany (see Ch. 5), and 19th-century Russia (Smith 1894). Given the evidence for greatly increasing Jewish economic power relative to the gentile community and the Jewish domination of the slave trade during this period described in the following, it is plausible to suppose that the legislation was prompted because increasing numbers of Christians were being enslaved by Jews.

This interpretation of the laws on slavery fits well with enactments against intermarriage that date from the same period. The Council of Elvira in Spain (ca. A.D. 300) and the Council of Nicaea (A.D. 325)[5] prohibited marriages between Jewish men and Christian women (DeClercq 1954, 42; Pakter 1992, 722). Given the sexual asymmetry of these regulations and the fact that during this period Jews were far more likely to own Christian slaves than the reverse, the suggestion is that these laws were intended to prevent wealthy Jewish men from having Christian concubines, and they may thus be seen as an aspect of Jewish/gentile resource competition during the period. As Synan (1965, 26) notes, "In the Christian Roman law, concern was manifested for the faith of Christian women, and the impression is that a woman was presumed to be incapable of resisting the prestige of the faith held by her husband. However this may be, the inferior status of slaves was certainly the motive for legislation against the holding of a Christian in bondage to a Jewish master." Concubinage was not illegal according to Jewish religious law and occurred commonly with female Muslim slaves in the medieval period (Friedman 1989, 39), although Jewish religious authorities often discouraged the practice. Gentile females had no right to marriage with an Israelite, and the children took the status of the mother (Mishna Qidd. 3.12). The descendants of such a union would not have been able to marry within the Jewish community (see note 4, p. 111).

The suggestion is that the lawmakers were attempting to prevent wealthy Jewish males from engaging in concubinage with Christian females. Since the

offspring of these women would not have been Jews, the general thrust of the legislation of the period is best interpreted as a means not of preventing the mass conversion of Christians to Judaism but of preventing Jews from competing with Christian males for access to Christian females, and of preventing a one-way flow of genes from the Jewish to the Christian population. The data are entirely compatible with the proposal that wealthy Jewish males were siring Jewish heirs by Jewish women but were also engaging in concubinage with female slaves, with the children from these unions being lost to the Jewish community.[6]

The second hypothesis for explaining Christian anti-Semitism during this period is that it was aimed at the gentile "Judaizers," i.e., gentiles who associated with Jews and were attracted to Jewish rituals. Again, the proposed motive is the purely institutional one of maximizing the number of committed Christians and diminishing Jewish influence on society. Judaizing may have been fairly common during this period, and there is no question that Judaizers attracted the hostility of the Church fathers, especially St. John Chrysostom, who was an ardent anti-Semite.

It is of some importance to attempt to fathom the motives of these gentile Judaizers. Simon's treatment suggests that since Christians and Jews had similar religious festivals, it was not uncommon for Christians to engage in syncretism, for instance, by resting on the Jewish Sabbath or celebrating during Passover, without actually becoming converted. Wilken's treatment (1983, 67; see also Feldman 1993, 389) also suggests that a motivating force may have been the celebratory nature of such Jewish rituals as Passover. While St. John Chrysostom's account is hardly dispassionate, he implies that Jewish celebrations attracted Christians interested in dancing, theatre, magic and the party-like atmosphere of these celebrations (*Adversus Judaeos* 1.2:846–847). Consistent with this interpretation, Feldman (1993, 376, 403) mentions a law against giving Christians gifts or celebrating with Jews on Jewish holidays, and there are indications that non-Jews were invited to eat with Jews and received unleavened bread during these celebrations. Church laws eventually prohibited Christians from entering synagogues or celebrating Jewish festivals (Wilken 1968, 62).

It would not be surprising to find non-members of an organization participating in celebrations where they received gifts and free food and may have been entertained with dancing and other entertainment. Jews may well have encouraged gentile participation in Jewish celebrations (but not actual conversion) as a means of developing good will in the gentile community—much like an "open house" in contemporary organizational life. Indeed, such practices may have become viewed as sound policy given the consistent criticism of gentile intellectuals in the ancient world that Jews hated the rest of humanity—their *odium generis humani* (see Chapter 2). Ancient Jewish writers such as Philo and Josephus were well aware of the charge of "non-mingling" with gentiles and its role in ancient anti-Semitism, and it would not be surprising if in later periods the Jewish community attempted to ameliorate this criticism.

In this regard, it may be significant that nine of the fifty-four Judaizers at Aphrodisias (the archeological site that most clearly indicates the commonness of Judaizing) were city council members—exactly the sort of wealthy, influential gentiles it would be in the interests of Jews to cultivate friendships with. Indeed, such individuals would be obliged to participate in public cults by virtue of their position. The finding is therefore best interpreted, as Goodman (1989, 177) does, as indicating that Jews approved of gentiles who worshipped other gods—not as support for large-scale conversion by the gentile elite. Also, as Feldman (1993, 441) points out, it would be in the interest of wealthy, powerful gentiles to maintain good ties with the very prosperous and influential Jewish community. In any case, there is little reason to suppose that Judaizing represented an important halfway position on the road to full conversion: Feldman bases his discussion on the Aphrodisias site where there were apparently three proselytes and fifty-four Judaizers.

There may be other reasons why the Jews attracted the sympathies of some gentiles during this period.[7] Nevertheless, by all accounts this gentile sympathy to Judaism occurred at a time of increasingly intense anti-Semitism at all levels of the gentile society. One can easily interpret the Christian reaction to Judaism during this period as an aspect of an emerging group evolutionary strategy defined at its very essence as opposed to Judaism. I will argue that the fervent Christian opposition to Judaizing seen in St. John Chrysostom and others may be seen as a reactive process to the confrontation between gentiles and an increasingly successful and salient threat represented by Jewish resource and reproductive competition. Chrysostom's intense anti-Semitism may be seen as an aspect of the general raising of the walls of separation between Jews and gentiles characteristic of this period and expected on the basis of social identity theory during periods of intensified group competition. The result of the actions of such churchmen as St. John Chrysostom would be an increasing identification of Christians as members of a group for whose members anti-Semitism was an important aspect of personal identity.

The proposal here is that in this period of enhanced group conflict, anti-Jewish leaders such as Chrysostom attempted to convey a very negative view of Jews. Jews were to be conceptualized not as harmless practitioners of exotic, entertaining religious practices, or as magicians, fortune tellers, or healers, but as the very embodiment of evil. The entire thrust of the legislation that emerged during this period was to erect walls of separation between Jews and gentiles, to solidify the gentile group, and to make all gentiles aware of who the "enemy" was. Whereas these walls had been established and maintained previously only by Jews, in this new period of intergroup conflict the gentiles were raising walls between themselves and Jews. And while Jews may have been happy to attract the sympathy of elite gentiles by encouraging Judaizing, Judaizing would be anathema to anti-Jewish leaders, who would insist that the walls between groups be high and that each person belong to only one group. During this period of group conflict, there could be no half-way commitment to either group. As

Chrysostom himself said, " 'Fortify one another.' If a catechumen is sick with this disease, let him be kept outside the church doors. If the sick one be a believer and already initiated, let him be driven from the holy table. . . . The wounds that have festered and cannot be cured, those which are feeding on the rest of the body, need cauterization with a point of steel" (*Adversus Judaeos* II.III.6). The battle between groups must commence. In the long run, the consequences of this Christian group strategy would be a general lowering of the economic and reproductive prospects of the Jewish community.

All anti-Semitic movements have probably had to combat gentiles who were viewed as insufficiently fervent in their anti-Semitism and whose commitment to an anti-Semitic group strategy was lukewarm or even hostile. It does not follow that attempts to combat convivial relationships between Jews and gentiles are motivated solely by fear that the latter may be converted to Judaism or that Judaism will exert too strong an influence on society. Thus the Council of Elvira (ca. 300) prohibited eating and socializing with Jews but it also prohibited marriages between Jewish males and Christian females. Banning positive social relationships between Jews and gentiles dovetailed with a deeper concern that Jewish males were competing with Christian males for access to females.

There has been a tendency throughout Jewish history for wealthy, powerful gentiles to make alliances with Jews (see *PTSDA*, Ch. 5). (Indeed, this may well account for Feldman's [1993, 441] point that Judaizers tended to be wealthy, influential gentiles.) In terms of the social psychology of individualism/collectivism (Triandis 1990), these gentile elites are idiocentric individualists who are not prone to participating in a highly cohesive, authoritarian group. Other anti-Jewish movements, such as National Socialism, excluded such individuals from positions of power and dealt harshly with gentiles who disobeyed laws designed to separate Jews and gentiles.

Moreover, the "concern with proselytizing and Judaizing" hypothesis is insufficient to account for other prominent examples of ecclesiastical anti-Semitism during the period. St. John Chrysostom's condemnation of Judaizers is not apparent among several other prominent anti-Semites, and clear examples of Judaizing occur only in Antioch and other parts of the Near East. Ecclesiastical concerns about Judaizing and overly positive gentile attitudes toward Jews were apparently nonexistent in Alexandria, where the very stridently anti-Jewish St. Cyril held sway (Simon 1986, 373; Wilken 1971, 68). Cyril's writings are dominated by a concern with Judaism: "Cyril never gets the Jews off his mind" (Wilken 1971, 159–160); "There is scarcely a page on which he does not lash the Jews for their infidelity to God. He never fails to exploit the slightest allusion susceptible of being twisted into a description of their hostility to Christ and the Church" (Kerrigan 1952, 385).

Cyril not only wrote negatively about Jews but was instrumental in expelling Jews from Alexandria and allowing the mob to loot their property after an incident in which Jews attacked a Christian. Indeed, a contemporary account of the incident describes it as being precipitated when Jews attacked a man who

stood out by applauding Cyril's anti-Jewish sermons (see Wilken 1971, 55). Cyril's sermonizing was thus not in opposition to gentile Judaizers, but to Jews, and it was so inflammatory that it resulted in a riot.

The interpretation proposed here is that group conflict between Jews and gentiles entered a new stage in the 4th century. It is of considerable interest that it was during this period that accusations of Jewish greed, wealth, love of luxury and of the pleasures of the table became common (Simon 1986, 213). Such accusations did not occur during earlier periods, when anti-Jewish writings concentrated instead on Jewish separatism. These new charges suggest that Jews had increasingly developed a reputation as wealthy, and they in turn suggest that anti-Semitism had entered a new phase in the ancient world, one centered around resource competition and concerns regarding Jewish economic success, domination of gentiles, and relative reproductive success.

The resource competition hypothesis proposes that over time Judaism became increasingly viewed as a competitive threat to gentiles for either or both of the following reasons. First, Jewish educational practices and economic cooperation had made Jews into increasingly effective economic competitors with gentiles. This hypothesis would be directly supported by evidence on Jewish wealth and indirectly supported by evidence that education and high-investment parenting were the routes to upward mobility in Greco-Roman society of the period. Second, Jews had become more numerous because of any of the following: increasing wealth resulted in increased fertility—a common association in traditional societies; Mishnaic practices related to high-investment parenting resulting in increased survivorship of Jewish children (a phenomenon well attested from other periods and also enshrined in the Mishna and the Talmud); the banning of abortion and exposure of children (the latter of which was common in the pre-Christian Roman Empire); an ideology in which the commandment to "be fruitful and multiply" resulted in a religious obligation of marriage and children; charity to poor Jews allowing all segments of the Jewish community to reproduce; and the timing of intercourse to maximize fertility.

The hypothesis is that by the end of the 3rd century, Judaism had come to be seen as a powerful competitor with gentiles. While Jewish economic success and practices related to reproduction would have resulted in relatively high Jewish fertility, individualist societies, such as the Roman Empire, are relatively less concerned with fertility, have less stable family relationships, and tend to show higher levels of child maltreatment and abandonment (see Triandis 1990).[8] Moreover, the population of the Empire as a whole was declining during this period (Jones 1964, 1042). To be more precise, the later Empire had an expanding population at the top of the human energy pyramid (army, civil service and clergy) and a declining population among the rural peasantry, because so much of the production of the peasantry was being expropriated that they were unable to replace themselves (Jones 1964, 1043). Jones cites evidence for extremely high taxation of the peasantry, and there are indications that both the rural and urban lower classes were committing infanticide because they were

too poor to rear children. Another sign of a high level of reproductive competition in the early 4th century is that men in the Eastern Empire—the area of the most intense anti-Semitism and the largest percentage of Jews—married very late in life.

This situation indicates not only a high level of reproductive competition but also ecological instability because the base of primary production was shrinking while the top of the pyramid was expanding: "too few producers supported too many idle mouths" (Jones 1964, 1045). This would tend to result in greater competition within the higher levels of the human energy pyramid. Since throughout their history Jews have been overrepresented at the top of the human energy pyramid (*PTSDA*, Ch. 5), there is the suggestion that competition for resources had increased greatly at this level of society during this period. Indeed, Jones (1964, 947–948) notes that Jews were increasingly entering the imperial and municipal service in the 4th century until being excluded from these occupations in the 5th century—an aspect of the wide range of economic, social, and legal prohibitions on Jews dating from this period (see below). These factors, combined with traditional gentile hostility to Judaism (because of its separatist practices and perceptions of Jewish misanthropy and perhaps of Jewish wealth), to set the stage for a major anti-Semitic movement. The proposal here is that this anti-Semitic movement crystallized in the Christian Church.[9]

Since the work of Cohen (1976), historians have increasingly emphasized the economic prosperity of the Jewish community in the 4th and 5th century during this period of economic and demographic decline for the society as a whole. The Jewish population and the Jewish economic and social presence in the Empire declined precipitously after the failed rebellions of the 1st and 2nd century (Wilken 1983, 46–47). However, the 3rd and 4th centuries were a time of "new life and vitality" of the Jewish community, and during this period the Patriarchate was wealthy and powerful. Wilken (1983, 44) views it as likely that the Jewish community grew larger and more prosperous during this period, and Feldman (1993, 366) interprets the evidence as indicating that the Jewish population was expanding even as the economic and demographic fortunes of the Empire were declining. Juster (1914, 294) describes the "prolificité de la race" and the entry of Jews into a very diverse set of occupations.[10] In the Theodosian Code, Jews are referred to as a "pestilence and a contagion if it should spring forth and spread abroad more widely" (CTh 16.5.44), suggesting a fear of Jewish demographic increase.

Finally, Juster (1914, 305ff) notes that Jews were very prominent in certain sectors of the Roman economy, including the slave trade, banking, national and international trade, and the law. Jews had also developed monopolies in specific industries, including silk, clothing, glassware, and the trade in luxury items.[11] Moreover, Juster (p. 312) directly connects the intensification of these economic developments in the 4th century with an increase in popular anti-Semitism, as well as with the accusations of the Church fathers during this period that Jews

were characterized by avarice and cupidity. Indeed, despite the restrictions on Jews which began during this period, Juster notes that Jews completely dominated national and international trade and especially the slave trade in the 5th and 6th centuries.

This view of the continuing economic power of Jews in the 5th and 6th century is highly compatible with Bachrach's (1985) suggestion that the Jews were so wealthy, powerful, and aggressive that until around the middle of the 5th century the government viewed a strong anti-Jewish policy as not politically viable, even though it was continually being pressured in this direction by the Church. The rather limited anti-Jewish actions of the government during the 150 years following the Edict of Toleration of 313 are interpreted "as attempts to protect Christians from a vigorous, powerful, and often aggressive Jewish *gens*" (Bachrach 1985, 408). The Jews themselves were perceived by the emperors, the government, and the Church fathers as "an aggressive, well-organized, wealthy, and powerful minority" (p. 408). Particularly revealing are the suggestion that the solvency of the municipalities depended on Jews paying their taxes and the fear that offending the Jews could set off widespread and costly revolts, such as the one led by Patricius in 351.

Moreover, as Juster suggests, popular anti-Semitism was not simply a matter of manipulation by the Church in order to serve institutional goals. The intensely anti-Semitic rhetoric of the Church fathers struck a deep resonance with popular attitudes. Indeed, Simon (1986, 231–232; see also Avi-Yonah 1976, 223; Jones 1964, 948–949) notes that "if the Christian populace so many times threw itself into the attack on synagogue after synagogue, it was not because it passively accepted orders given from above. The mass of believers, who were of gentile birth, had not on conversion shed their pagan feelings of dislike toward the Jews. If the anti-Jewish polemic was so successful, it was because it awakened latent hatreds and appealed to feelings that were already there."

From what we know of other societies (see Chapter 2 and *PTSDA*, Ch. 5), it would be remarkable if anti-Semitism based on resource and reproductive competition did not increase under these circumstances. The situation may well have resembled that in Eastern Europe in the 19th century, where despite considerable poverty among Jews and the presence of Jews in a wide range of occupations, there was a huge Jewish demographic increase, combined with a very large overrepresentation of Jews in terms of economic power, trading monopolies, and positions requiring education and intelligence. It is well known that this situation was associated with intense anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe.

Indeed, as a general point, it is well to remember that Jews were "a very visible and significant element of the population" (deLange 1991, 33), constituting somewhere between 7 and 12 percent of the population of the Empire and perhaps 20 percent in the Eastern Empire (Baron 1952, I, 170; Feldman 1993, 92; Wilken 1971, 9). When one considers that intense anti-Semitism has occurred in societies where Jews comprise as little as 1 percent of the population (i.e., Germany from 1870 to 1933) and that even within the Roman empire anti-

Semitism was proportional to Jewish concentration (Simon 1986, 206), it would not be surprising to suppose that the roots of this new wave of anti-Semitism were far deeper than the traditional complaints of ancient intellectuals about Jewish separatism or the institutional concerns of a newly triumphant Church.

There is also some indication that the negative views common among churchmen and others during this period resulted from perceptions of resource and reproductive competition with Jews. The intensity of these attitudes strongly suggests that more than mere theology is involved. Emperor Constantine (who made Christianity the state religion) was a "passionate" anti-Semite (MacMullen 1969, 175; see also Hollerich 1992, 594).

[The Jews are] a people who, having imbrued their hands in a most heinous outrage [i.e., killing Christ], have thus polluted their souls and are deservedly blind. . . . Therefore we have nothing in common with that most hostile of people the Jews. We have received from the Savior another way . . . our holy religion: unanimously pursuing this, let us . . . withdraw ourselves from that detestable association. For it is truly absurd for them to boast that we are incapable of rightly observing these things [i.e., religious holy days] without their instruction. For on what subject will they be competent to form a correct judgment, who after that murder of their Lord, having been bereft of their senses, are led not by any rational motive, but by an ungovernable impulse, wherever their innate fury may drive them? (Emperor Constantine; in Wilken 1968, 58)

Words translated as "nefarious" and "feral" were used to describe Jews in imperial legislation of the period (Hollerich 1992, 594; Wilken 1983, 50). This represented a marked change in the tone of imperial legislation related to Jews, and indeed, the changes marked "a clear departure from the previous imperial policy of toleration toward the Jewish religion" (Barnes 1981, 252).

Moreover, it is more than doubtful that Constantine's anti-Semitism arose from purely theological reasons. Constantine was not even baptized until shortly before his death, and most commentators have viewed him as rather tolerant toward paganism (e.g., S. G. Wilson 1985, 368). Bachrach (1985, 416) interprets the data as indicating that Constantine perceived Jews as a wealthy, powerful, and aggressive group; Grant (1973, 284) suggests that Constantine believed that the Jews were attempting to dominate the Roman Empire and that they regarded themselves as superior to everyone else. Themes of Jewish economic and political domination and Jewish superiority are not specifically Christian, and they suggest that theological beliefs alone are not adequate in conceptualizing the anti-Semitism of the period. Alleged Jewish attitudes of superiority may derive from the economic and social success of Jews as a group; this charge is repeated by Isaac of Antioch in the middle of the 5th century (Feldman 1993, 407).

While Constantine's motives in establishing Christianity are not well understood, it is believed by some that he viewed Christianity as benefiting the Empire—as "restoring and enhancing, not diminishing, all that was valuable in Greco-Roman culture" (Barnes 1992, 647; see also Sordi 1986, 141). While the

fate of the Jews may not have been uppermost in Constantine's mind, he must have been aware of the clear overtones of anti-Semitism in the Church. In addition to the "conventional Christian *animus* against the Jews" and the sharpening of the anti-Jewish overtones of Christian theology among such contemporary theologians as Eusebius, the Council of Elvira (ca. A.D. 300)—well before Constantine's establishment of Christianity as the state religion—had passed three anti-Jewish prohibitions: banning marriages between Jewish men and Christian women, banning Jews from blessing Christian land and fruits, and prohibiting eating and socializing with Jews (see DeClercq 1954, 41–42; Feldman 1993, 373, 380, 398).

Indeed, there is a direct connection between the Council of Elvira and Constantine. Ossius, the Bishop of Cordova (the most important episcopal see in the province of Spain), was a major participant and perhaps the moving force behind the Council of Elvira (DeClercq 1954, 105). Ossius may well have played a leading role in Constantine's conversion or at least increased Constantine's commitment to Christianity, since it was he who interpreted Constantine's dream prior to the battle of Milvian Bridge in Christian terms (Wilken 1992, 740). Ossius remained the most prominent religious advisor in Constantine's entourage throughout a major portion of Constantine's reign, and Constantine had very high regard for him personally (DeClercq 1954, 152ff). DeClercq (1954, 41–42, 117) interprets the inscriptional evidence and the anti-Jewish canons of the Council of Elvira as indicating large Jewish communities in the area of Cordova (Baetica), and on the basis of the large Jewish presence in Ossius's bishopric, he suggests that Ossius proposed the anti-Jewish canons of the council. In any case, the Elviran anti-Jewish canons, and particularly the prohibition of marriage between Jewish men and Christian women, strongly suggest that resource competition between Jews and Christians was a highly salient issue at the Council of Elvira. Ossius also presided over the Council of Nicaea (A.D. 325) which, according to the Arabic version, adopted a similarly worded measure opposing marriage between Jewish men and Christian women (Pakter 1992, 722).

Constantine's anti-Semitism may well have meshed with attitudes he had already developed independently prior to his conversion. Or perhaps his anti-Semitism increased after his conversion to Christianity as a result of influence by prelates like Ossius. In any case, the patently anti-Semitic overtones of the Church during this period were clearly no deterrent to Constantine's decision to establish Christianity as the state religion.

It must be emphasized how extremely hostile toward Jews the 4th-century Christian polemicists were. The most intense anti-Semite of this period was St. John Chrysostom (b. 349), whose writings and orations "are presented with such violence and at times such a coarseness of language as to be without parallel" (Simon 1986, 217). The Jew is presented as "a monstrous, villainous figure, calculated to inspire in all who look at it a proper horror" (Simon 1986, 220).

While the great majority of Chrysostom's comments derive Jewish evil from Christian theology, he also describes Jews as numerous and wealthy, and he complains about the wealth of the Jewish Patriarch (*Contra Jud. et gent.* 16; 48.834–5). He states that the patriarchs are not priests fulfilling a purely religious function, but rather they are shopkeepers and businessmen (Cohen 1976, 4), indicating that Chrysostom viewed Judaism more as an economic entity than a religious organization. Jews are often compared to predatory beasts and are accused of virtually every evil, including economic crimes such as profiteering. The intensely anti-Jewish St. Jerome also refers to Jews as encircling Christians and seeking to tear them apart (Feldman 1993, 407).[12] Jerome decries the Jews' love for money in several passages (Parkes 1934, 191) and he complained that the Jews were multiplying "like vermin" (in Baron 1952, II, 220)—a comment that clearly suggests a concern with Jewish reproductive success.[13]

The fact that the vast majority of the anti-Semitic comments of the period were expressed in religious terms may be due to the lack of a more sophisticated rhetoric. As Feldman (1993, 107) points out, intellectuals of the period had not developed a language in which issues related to economic (or ethnic) conflict could be articulated in an intellectually respectable manner. Perhaps in the absence of such a rhetoric, group conflict was conceptualized largely in religious terms, although, as indicated below, Eusebius and others saw Jews as a racial/ethnic group.

While Chrysostom was the most extreme, his methods and attitudes were typical of the period (Simon 1986, 222). Outspoken anti-Semitism was characteristic of many of those who rose in the Church hierarchy and among many prominent Christian writers of the 4th and 5th century (e.g., Eusebius, St. John Chrysostom, St. Augustine, St. Jerome, St. Ambrose, St. Cyril of Alexandria, St. Gregory of Nyssa). In the Eastern Church during this period, the monks were "militant anti-Semites" who had considerable influence among the Church hierarchy (Simon 1986, 213). The suggestion is that anti-Semitism was of prime importance in attaining positions of power and influence in the Church during this period. Individuals exhibited their anti-Semitism openly, as a badge of honor, and were made saints of the Church after their death.

Indeed, writing of the period generally, Wilken (1971, 21) notes that a significant percentage of all Christian writings during the period are essentially *adversos Judeaos*. Consistent with the present theory that this was a period in which walls were being erected between Jews and gentiles, there is little attempt in this literature to convert Jews, and certainly no attempt at all in the writings of St. John Chrysostom (Ruether 1974, 148). These writings are attempts not to reach out to Jews but rather to define an ingroup fundamentally opposed to Jews. Moreover, the *adversos Judaeos* tradition is fundamental to all Christian exegesis:

The *adversos Judeaos* tradition represents the overall method of Christian exegesis of the Old Testament. . . . It was virtually impossible for the Christian preacher or exegete to teach scripturally at all without alluding to the anti-Judaic theses. Christian scriptural

teaching and preaching per se is based on a method in which anti-Judaic polemic exists as the left hand of its christological hermeneutic. (Ruether 1974, 121)

This rhetoric was meant to apply not only to the Jews of the Old Testament but also to their descendants in the contemporary world. According to Chrysostom, Jewish responsibility for killing Christ and their many other vices have been passed to the descendants of the ancient Jews as inherited traits (Ruether 1974, 130; Lazar 1991a, 77n).

Moreover, Simon (see also Wilson 1985) points out that anti-Semitic references occurred in Christian liturgy and rites, especially those surrounding Holy Week emphasizing the role of the Jews in the crucifixion of Christ. Prayers and homilies intended for use by the masses of Christians contained reproaches against the Jews (Wilken 1971, 30). Christian holidays and periods of fasting were set up to be directly opposite to Jewish ones and to act as anti-Jewish commemorations. Thus the Christian Holy Week originally coincided with the Jewish Passover, but the liturgy emphasized Christian mourning for the Jewish act of deicide at a time of Jewish rejoicing (Ruether 1974, 171). Friday became a fast day commemorating the crucifixion, whereas for Jews, Friday was a joyous time prior to the Sabbath. Anti-Jewish attitudes were deeply ingrained in the important documents of the religion and closely connected to expressions of Christian faith (Baum 1974, 2).

Indeed, Lazar (1991a) notes a general trend in Church propaganda of the medieval period in which Jews became the very personification of evil in a dualistic system of categorization in which the essence of Christianity was defined by its antithesis to Judaism. Jews are the Beast (a predatory analogy), while Christians are lambs (potential prey). Jews are the Antichrist, their descendants fathered by the Devil upon a Jewish prostitute. Their mission is to destroy Christianity and rule over the world—a clear expression of fear of Jewish domination. This world view was then preached to the illiterate masses of gentiles, who were undoubtedly predisposed to view the Jews in negative terms, with devastating consequences for Judaism. Again, this strongly suggests that late Roman Christianity fundamentally defined itself by its opposition to Judaism.

For at least some of the Church fathers there is reason to suppose that the original impetus to their anti-Semitism came not from theology but from ethnic conflict, as suggested above for Bishop Ossius. In the 2nd century the anti-Jewish tone of the writings of Melito of Sardis suggests hostility toward the contemporary wealthy and numerous community of Jews in Sardis rather than toward the long-deceased Israelites of the Old Testament (Wilson 1985). Eusebius (ca. 260–339), a highly influential Christian apologist and contemporary of Constantine, lived in the city of Caesarea in Palestine where there had been conflict between Jews and Greeks for well over two hundred years—long predating Christian influence. The entire Jewish population of twenty thousand was wiped out by the Greek townspeople during the war of A.D. 66–70, but was reconstituted shortly thereafter, and Jews continued to live as a minority in the

city with Greeks and Samaritans (Alon 1989, 139–140). The "constant friction" between these groups (none of whom was a majority), influenced the anti-Semitic tone of Eusebius's apologetic writings (Attridge & Hata 1992, 29). As discussed in Chapter 2, conflict between Jews and Greeks was common in the ancient world, particularly in Alexandria, and it derived from Jewish separatism and, in at least some cases, resource competition.

St. John Chrysostom's anti-Semitic rhetoric occurred in Antioch, which also had a long history of friction between Jews and gentiles, including, in the 1st century, repeated requests that Jews be expelled (see Chapter 2). "Such sermons as these gave the blessings of the Church's greatest preacher . . . to what was now a government-sanctioned destruction of Jewish civic status and an increasing tendency for religion to become a vehicle of popular violence against the Jews" (Ruether 1974, 180). Physical violence broke out repeatedly in 5th-century Antioch, complete with charges of ritual murder; synagogues were destroyed. In the 6th century there was an attempt at mass conversion of the Jews, followed by a massacre and expulsion from the city.

Anti-Semitism appears to be not simply an ancillary aspect of Eusebius's larger purpose of constructing a Christian view of history. Rather, he constructs a fundamentally anti-Jewish view of history, going to great lengths to emphasize the evil of the Jews and the divine justice of the catastrophes (such as the destruction of the Second Temple) that have befallen the Jews for rejecting God and ultimately for killing Christ. "At points, Eusebius appears to write history primarily as the vindication of Christ the Savior against the dastardly deeds of the Jews" (Horsley 1992, 53). Eusebius often exploits the many references to Israelite sinfulness and failure to keep the covenant in the Old Testament as indicating the general evil of the Jews. Relying on the many condemnations by the prophets for immoral behavior of the Israelites (e.g., greed, lack of charity to widows and orphans), Eusebius also condemns Judaism for developing into a set of rituals with no moral content.

The culmination of this perceived Jewish evil is, of course, the rejection and killing of Christ. By rejecting Christ as the Messiah, the Jews have rejected God and have forfeited their status as the Chosen People. Their punishment for this rejection can already be seen by their defeats at the hands of the Romans, their loss of secular power, and the loss of their priesthood. This punishment had even been prophesied by Isaiah: "But if ye refuse and rebel, Ye shall be devoured with the sword" (Isa. 1:20). Because of its iniquities, Israel's fate is eternal punishment as prophesied by Isaiah (34:9–10): "And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, And the dust thereof into brimstone."

The result was a very potent ideology of anti-Semitism. While pagan anti-Semitism was "secular and popular" (Simon 1986, 208) and the anti-Jewish writings of pagan intellectuals were "elitist and literary" (Wilson 1985, 354), Christian anti-Semitism was not only intellectually respectable but also developed an emotionally compelling anti-Semitic liturgy.[14] There were, in fact, overtones of anti-Semitism in Christian theology from the very beginning—

what Hollerich (1992, 594) terms a "conventional Christian *animus* against the Jews" centered on the Jewish rejection of Jesus as the Messiah.[15] However, the traditional anti-Semitic overtones of Christianity, as seen for example in the writings of Justin Martyr and Melito of Sardis in the 2nd century, were exploited and extended by these 4th- and 5th-century writers. With the political success of the Church, society as a whole became organized around a monolithic, hegemonic, and collectivist social institution defined by its opposition to Judaism: Eusebius's dream of "one God, one emperor, one Church" (Wilken 1983, 129).

However, despite this collectivist, authoritarian social structure, the traditional universalism and assimilationism of Western societies was also incorporated into the new ideology: For Eusebius, the coming of the Messiah had resulted in a universalist Christian community that would eventually include all of mankind. Eusebius very self-consciously de-emphasizes the powerful overtones of ethnic exclusivity apparent in the Old Testament. Christianity was the "primeval religion" of humanity (Barnes 1981, 126; see also Ruether 1974, 141). The patriarchs were the first Christians. They represented a universal race of mankind, and their religion has now been proclaimed for all of humanity.

Eusebius argues that Abraham must have intended to found a religion for all of humanity, not only the Jews—an indication that, contrary to the claims of Simon (1986) and Feldman (1993), Eusebius most definitely did not view the Judaism of his day as universalist. The Mosaic law, unlike the universal, primeval religion of the Patriarchs, "was tied to the Jewish race and to the land of Israel" (Barnes 1981, 185). Indeed, it is important to keep in mind that Judaism was commonly viewed in the ancient world as a national/ethnic religion (see *PTSDA*, Ch. 4): "Judaism was in reality not so much the religion of the mother-country as the religion of the Jewish race; it was a national religion not in a political but in a genealogical sense" (Moore 1927–1930, I, 225). In *The Proof of the Gospel*, Eusebius (1920) repeatedly contrasts the universalist message of Christianity versus the religion of the "Jewish race." The new covenant is "not for the Jewish race only" (I.4.7.d) but "summons all men equally to share together the same good things" (I.4.8.c). Barnes (1981, 172) translates another passage from Eusebius to the effect that God had promised that gentiles would "come from the east and west, and that they would become equal to Abraham and those other blessed men because of their equally good way of life. How the descendants and successors of those same men . . . have been deprived of their promised blessings is shown clearly by the sack of their city, the siege of their temple, their scattering among all the races of mankind" (in Barnes 1981, 172). Eusebius thus views the Jews as biological descendants of Abraham who have rejected the universal message of Christianity, which remains open to them if only they would see the light.

The view that the Jews were a biological descent group and not simply believers in a religion appears to have been common during the period and is apparent in the wording of imperial legislation. Isidore of Seville, quoting

Jeremiah, wrote that the evil character of Jews could not be changed: "Can the Ethiopian change his color or the lepoard his spots?" (Michael 1994, 115). St. Augustine (1959) has a clear image of Jews as a biological descent group and that prevention of genetic admixture is a critical component of Judaism: "Even after losing their temple, their sacrifice, their priesthood, and their kingdom, they hold on to their name and race in a few ancient rites, lest, mixed indiscriminately with the Gentiles, they perish and lose the testimony of the truth." Jews could never lose the stigma of having killed Christ, because they were biologically linked to their ancestors: "The evil of the Jews, 'in their parents, led to death' " (Michael 1994, 115).

Similarly, Chrysostom views the Jewish responsibility for killing Christ and their many other vices as being passed to the descendants of the ancient Jews as inherited traits (Ruether 1974, 130; see also Lazar 1991a, 77n; Michael 1994, 114). On the other hand, God, by creating the taboo against marrying relatives, "connected us anew by marriage, uniting together whole families by the single person of the bride, and mingling entire races together" (Homily 34 on 1 Corinthians; in Greer 1986, 138). Pope Galasius I (492–496) also refers to Jews in racial terms (*gens*) (see Synan 1965, 32, 174n.3). The Theodosian Code refers to the "perversity of this race" (CTh 16.8.24) and in several other places refers to Jews as a race. For Emperor Julian, who was a friend of the Jews and an enemy of Christianity, the Jews' " 'tribal God' fitted neatly into his system of national gods subordinate to the supreme deity" (Bowder 1978, 111).

Moreover, a consistent thread of Christian theology was to berate the Jews for interpreting the Old Testament literally; i.e., "in a fleshly and bodily sense" (Barnes 1981, 98; see also Boyarin 1993, 6), referring to the Jewish concern with genealogy and the many promises of reproductive success and worldly riches.[16] For Eusebius, Judaism had strong racial/ethnic overtones and erroneously interpreted its sacred writings as mandating reproductive success, control of resources, and emphasizing genetic relatedness. Christianity is the opposite: a universal religion for all humanity, a religion that glorifies spiritual accomplishments and celibacy rather than the evolutionary goals so central to Judaism.[17]

Indeed, such a conceptualization of Judaism was hardly foreign to rabbinical thought. As Boyarin (1993, 231) points out and as I have attempted to document extensively (see *PTSDA*, Ch. 4), the ethnic, genealogical component of Judaism as well as its emphasis on control of resources and reproductive success were not only very clearly articulated in rabbinical thought but were also reflected in the actual behavior of Jews throughout the period.

This Christian anti-Semitic ideology was accompanied by an increase in anti-Jewish actions sanctioned and even encouraged by the Church. There was also a major concern with heterodoxy during the period, resulting in persecution of pagan religions and Christian heretics. Such behaviors would be expected given the characterization of the Church as intent on producing a collectivistic, universalistic, and homogeneous society. Fanatical monks "stirred up mobs of Chris-

tians to pillage synagogues, cemeteries, and other property, seize or burn Jewish religious buildings, and start riots in the Jewish quarter" (Ruether 1974, 192). Bishops were instrumental in large-scale forced baptisms and expulsions of Jews from Alexandria and Antioch in the fifth century, and eventually the Jewish community in the Eastern Empire "sank into ignominy and looked to the Persian and then the Moslem empire for deliverance" (Ruether 1974, 194).

Christians were able to destroy synagogues with virtual impunity and with the tacit or open approval of the Church. There are several episodes indicating that the Church pressured the government to forgive anti-Semitic acts, the most famous being an incident in 388 in which St. Ambrose succeeded in getting Emperor Theodosius to rescind an order for a bishop to rebuild a synagogue destroyed by anti-Jewish action. Gradually imperial legislation made penalties for the destruction of synagogues weaker and weaker, so that eventually restitution was not necessary. Finally, by 423, building new synagogues and even repair of old synagogues were prohibited.

Constantine also "translated Christian prejudice against Jews into legal disabilities" (Barnes 1981, 252; see also Bachrach 1984; Cohen 1976; Feldman 1993; Jones 1964, 948ff; Pakter 1992). The legal disabilities at first reflected traditional Roman policies toward the Jews expressed now in much more negative language. As we have seen, this relative moderation of imperial legislation quite possibly reflected the great power and wealth of the Jewish community during the 4th and 5th centuries. As indicated above, there were prohibitions on owning Christian slaves and seeking or accepting converts to Judaism. Jews who attempted to prevent conversions from Judaism to Christianity were to be burned alive. The prohibition on owning Christian slaves was repeatedly enacted in later times, and later laws discouraged social contact and prohibited intermarriage. Jews were barred from the legal profession and government service, and they were prohibited from making accusations against Christians or even testifying against them in civil or criminal legal proceedings. The official Jewish government in exile (the Patriarchate) was abolished in the early 5th century, and Jews were subjected to special taxes. Synagogue dues were confiscated by the government (Jones 1964, 947). Wilken (1971, 27) notes that the Theodosian Code also regulated economic relationships between Jews and gentiles, including the price of Jewish goods—another indication that economic issues were lurking in the background of group conflict. "What impresses the reader is the sheer volume of legislation from the late fourth and early fifth century touching on Jewish matters" (Wilken 1971, 27).

Nevertheless, despite these official government acts, there is evidence that the government was often reluctant to pursue these anti-Semitic restrictions and did so only in the face of ecclesiastical and popular pressure (Jones 1964, 948; see also Bachrach 1985, 421; Cohen 1991, 87). Simon (1986, 227) notes that the Church was active and influential in changing imperial legislation regarding the Jews, and the wording of the laws often betrays extreme hostility to the Jews. It was during this period that the Church developed the ideology that it was

superior to the emperors (Schimmelpfennig 1992, 261)—clearly a necessary condition if the Church was to be an instrument of anti-Semitism rather than having only a spiritual function.[18] Moreover, the Jews themselves were quite aware of the role of the Church as an instrument of anti-Semitism. When the Persians invaded the Eastern Empire, Jews burned Churches and threatened Christians with massacre if they did not renounce their faith (Jones 1964, 950).

As with the official Muslim position, Jews were allowed to exist within Christian societies, but, as a condemned people, their life was to be miserable. With this type of ideology it is easy to see that Christian religious ideology would be radically inconsistent with Jewish wealth, political power, and reproductive success, as was the Muslim ideology that Jews must remain in a humiliated and subservient status (Braude & Lewis 1982, 7). The suggestion here is that this was the intention from the beginning.

Most of the restrictions enacted against the Jews until the French Revolution were initiated in the period from Eusebius to Justinian (early 4th–6th centuries), indicating that this was a watershed period in Jewish-gentile relationships in Europe, and also indicating the centrality of the Church as an institution of Western anti-Semitism: "A millennium before the first compulsory ghettos appeared in 1550, canon and Roman law began to exclude Jews from Christian society economically, socially, and juridically" (Pakter 1992, 727; see also Ruether 1964, 183).

These developments indicate that walls of separation, formerly established and maintained exclusively by Jews, had now been erected on both sides of the divide, and they suggest that by the 4th century Jews and gentiles in the Roman Empire had entered into a new era in which group conflict had escalated. As Simon (1986, 223) notes, Christianity "strengthened the barriers that Jewish religious observances had already erected between Israel and the outside world."

Finally, it is worth thinking about Christianity as an evolutionary ideology. The writings of Eusebius and other Christian theorists of the period essentially contrast Christianity with Judaism, the latter conceptualized as an ethnocentric group genealogically linked to the patriarchs and interested in material and reproductive success in the contemporary world. I suppose that the reason for this set of contrasts was that the Empire had become a polyglot, ethnically diverse "chaos of peoples," to use Houston Stewart Chamberlain's phrase (see Chapter 5). As a result the group strategy in opposition to Judaism necessarily de-emphasized ethnicity (genealogical descent) as a basis for ingroup identification. The world became divided into Jews and non-Jews, the latter group with no ethnic commonality but nevertheless with a strong sense of ingroup identification as a Christian.

The result was that ethnicity had no official place in Christian religious ideology, and this in turn had a number of important consequences in later centuries. On the one hand, there is no question that Christianity was able to serve as a viable anti-Semitic ideology in other historical eras, notably the Middle Ages.

On the other hand, Christianity throughout its history has retained a strong sense that its mission is the conversion of all of humanity, and this can lead to compromising the ethnic interests of Christians. In Chapter 7, I discuss how the Converso theorists during the Spanish Inquisition argued on the basis of official Christian religious ideology that Christians should ignore the continuation of the Conversos as an unassimilated ethnic group within Spanish society and focus instead on their conformity (at least on the surface) to a common Christian religion. In the contemporary United States, Christian religious groups intent on converting all humans have at times favored the immigration of all groups, independent of ethnicity.

Late Roman Christianity therefore is characterized not only by traits that are mirror images of Judaism (i.e., its collectivist group structure and its deep sense of ingroups and outgroups); it is also characterized by traits that are the exact opposite of Judaism (i.e., universalism and a tendency to de-emphasize ethnicity and material and reproductive success). The tendency toward universalism and the de-emphasis on ethnicity as the basis of group identification can also be seen in Spanish Christianity. In Chapter 4, I emphasize the point that during the period of the Inquisition, Christianity co-occurred with a racialist ideology of blood purity. Nevertheless, this racialist ideology did not prevent the Spanish from attempting to genetically assimilate the New Christians; nor did it prevent them from converting the native peoples of Spanish America to Catholicism and eventually, via intermarriage, producing a mestizo culture in which ethnic divisions were considerably attenuated. However, we shall see that with the rise of the National Socialist movement in Germany, the universalist themes of Western Christianity were completely overthrown in favor of a full-blown racialist ideology of the ingroup. In Chapter 5 I will argue that National Socialism is a true mirror-image of Judaism. Not surprisingly it was also the most dangerous enemy that Judaism has confronted in its entire history.

Although the collectivist social structure developed by late-Roman Christian civilization was indeed a major departure from classical Roman civilization, the Church preserved several fundamental features of classical Roman civilization of critical importance to an evolutionist: socially imposed monogamy, exogamy, and the ideals of universalism and assimilationism (see Chapter 5, pp. 165–167, and *PTSDA*, Ch. 8; MacDonald 1990, 1995b). Socially imposed monogamy is especially important because it preserved the fundamentally egalitarian nature of Western social controls on reproductive behavior. Thus the development of a hierarchical, authoritarian institution at the center of Christian society did not result in the reproductive exploitation characteristic of Eastern and Middle Eastern societies, including the society depicted in the Tanakh.

Finally, the official status of Jews in Christian theology—that Jews should be tolerated in a subservient, powerless role because of their usefulness as testimony to the truth of Christianity—sometimes resulted in ecclesiastical pressure on governments not to eradicate the Jews completely or to attempt forced conversions (e.g., Bowman 1985, 9). Indeed, this official theological status of

Judaism may be the single most important reason for the survival of Judaism in the West (e.g., Neusner 1987, 146). Just as Jewish leaders often welcome low-level anti-Semitism because it tends to result in increased group solidarity (see Chapter 4 and *PTSDA*, Ch. 7), the spread of the Church may have benefited by the continued presence of Jews as an object of popular hatred, "the perfect foil for teaching Christianity to the masses" (Bowman 1985, 10). The Church may therefore have had a very real institutional interest in maintaining a relatively weak and powerless minority of Jews.

NOTES

1. The sociological race relations theory of Brown (1934) also would imply such a result. Brown posits that in a situation of colonial domination both the dominant and subordinate group have a tendency to develop self-justificatory racialist ideologies, often with a strong fear of racial admixture. "Race prejudice and race consciousness are operative on both sides to mobilize the races for struggle, define issues, and create an impasse which cannot easily be broken" (p. 46).

2. In *PTSDA* (Ch. 8) it was argued that the reason for the long term degradation of Jews in Arab lands was that Eastern cultures are much less predisposed to individualism. Highly collectivist cultures easily adopt group strategies against Judaism.

3. The word "*Nefas*" used in the Theodosian Code is an extremely derogatory term. Feldman (1993) translates it as "execrable" (p. 394) or "unspeakable abomination" (p. 90).

4. According to Maimonides (*The Code of Maimonides,* Book Five*, The Book of Holiness*, I. Laws Concerning Forbidden Intercourse, Ch. 12), all slaves undergo immersion and receive a rudimentary religious instruction; male slaves must be circumcised. Slaves are viewed as having left the community of idolators "but without entering the community of Israel" (p. 83). For a slave to become a member of the community of Israel, he or she had to first be manumitted and then marry an Israelite or a daughter of an Israelite. The manumitted slave would then undergo another immersion, thereby becoming a proselyte and a full Israelite (p. 89). If the slave refused to become an official "slave of Israel" and thereby avoid circumcision, immersion, and religious instruction, the master was to sell him or her to a heathen after one year. The basic logic of the Jewish law of slavery is apparent in the Mishnah (2nd century) and Palestinian Talmud (4th century), since slaves were required to say certain Jewish prayers and have certain religious obligations and abilities but not others (e.g., Ber. 3.3). Slaves were consistently distinguished as a category separate from both gentiles and Israelites. A woman was not obligated to enter a levirate marriage if the brother was the offspring of a gentile or slave (Yeb. 2.5), and female slaves had no right of betrothal to an Israelite male (Qidd. 3.12). The offspring of such a woman took the slave status of the mother.

5. The Nicene prohibition on intermarriage is included only in the canons of the Arabic version of the council (see Pakter 1992, 732n.86). Two later Spanish Church councils (in 589 and 633) reiterated this asymmetrical ban.

6. In 388 all intermarriage between Christians and Jews was prohibited by the Roman government on pain of death (CTh 9.7.5). Pakter takes the view that asymmetrical laws arose at times when Jews had such low status that marriage of a Christian man to a

Jewess would have been unthinkable, while symmetrical laws appeared when Jews had higher status and therefore were desirable mates. My position is that the asymmetrical laws were aimed at correcting an asymmetrical reality in which Jewish males were obtaining gentile females as concubines but very few, if any, ethnically Jewish women were concubines of gentile males. These laws derive from a concern with Jewish domination that is certainly present in the laws related to slavery dating from the same period, and there is good reason to suppose that Jews were quite prosperous and numerous in Spain at the time of the Council of Elvira (DeClercq 1954, 41–42, 117; see below) as well as in other areas of the Empire during this period. Pakter (1992, 722) implicates St. Ambrose, a strident anti-Semite, in the symmetrical legislation of 388. I would suppose that the symmetrical bans functioned not only to prevent Jews from having Christian concubines but also strengthen generally the walls of separation between Christians and Jews—a result of the exacerbation of social identity processes brought on by the height-ened Jewish/gentile group conflict characteristic of the period and apparent in the behavior of such prominent anti-Semites as St. Ambrose and St. John Chrysostom. The other situation, where gentiles have become concerned that Christian males marry Jews, emerges when Jews have married daughters into the Christian nobility while preventing any gene flow from gentiles into their stem families (see Chapters 4, 5, and the Appendix to Chapter 7). There is no evidence that this was a concern during the 4th and 5th centuries, but this may only reflect lack of historical sources.

7. Simon (1986, 358; see also Wilken 1983, 83ff) notes that some gentiles may have had positive images of Jews because of the Jewish role as physicians and healers. (Chrysostom admonishes Christians not to go to Jews for healing.) In the ancient world, healing was closely related to magic, sorcery, and astrology. Many gentiles, especially from the lower classes, may have been fascinated by Jews because of their high reputa-tion in these areas—their reputed ability to "ward off the Powers" (Simon 1986, 341). Jews were so prominently identified with magical powers that "it was largely by the agency of Judaism that the ancient world was impregnated with [syncretistic magic]. So prominent were Jews in this process that pagan opinion assumed magic to be an integral and characteristic element of Israel's religion" (Simon 1986, 342). Indeed, Wilken (1983, 86) notes that "it is quite conceivable that the same Jews who were welcoming Christians to the Jewish festivals were also healing their sicknesses with magic." Given this situa-tion, one can easily understand the curiosity, interest, and, indeed admiration which Jewish religious celebrations may have created in some gentiles, as well as the efforts of anti-Jewish leaders to alter gentile conceptions of Jews.

8. The Roman government since the time of Augustus had taken steps to raise the fertility of the aristocracy. These efforts met with little success until the laws were abolished by Constantine. Congruent with the relationship between individualism and low fertility, Garnsey and Saller (1987, 143–144; see also Hopkins 1983, 79–81) suggest that "it seems likely that many Romans came to take a more individualistic view of life, giving correspondingly less effort to ensuring the success of family and lineage." In individualistic societies, sexual pleasure tends to become a goal in itself, removed from its reproductive consequences, while Judaism remained committed to fertility and high parental investment as religious commandments.

9. Simon (1986, 214) argues that 4th-century charges by anti-Semites such as Chry-sostom related to Jewish wealth are illusory because (1) they occur prior to the time

when Jews were confined to moneylending, and indeed none mention usury as a Jewish vice; (2) pagans are also charged with similar vices; (3) Jews are also depicted as charitable; (4) Christians were ascetics and would therefore regard even normal human resource acquisition behavior as sinful.

However, the proposal that an important source of Christian anti-Semitism during this period involved negative attitudes toward Jewish wealth is quite consistent with the first three of these arguments. The first of Simon's reasons implies that gentile resentments about Jewish wealth could only have arisen from Jewish moneylending. This is far from true, as indicated by the material in Chapter 2. Moreover, anti-Semites often acknowledge that the negative traits disproportionately found among Jews are shared by some gentiles, and in any case, social identity theory implies that gentiles would preferentially attend to Jewish involvement in moneylending because Jews were a disliked outgroup. Finally, regarding Jewish charity, Chrysostom does indeed accuse the Jews of abandoning the poor" (*Adversus Judaeos* I.VII.1), presumably referring to the gentile poor; his other comments on Jewish charity may reflect his negative attitudes on Jewish within-group charity.

Simon's argument based on Christian asceticism is surely speculative, especially since many Christians, including many clergymen, were quite well off economically during this period (Wilken 1983, 6). Education in rhetoric was the pathway to upward mobility, indicating that, as in modern societies (Lynn 1992), verbal intelligence was critical. These are, of course, exactly the types of skills at which Jews have excelled throughout their history and that are the expected consequences of Jewish educational and eugenic practices (*PTSDA*, Ch. 7). These practices had already been established for at least the nine generations between the destruction of the Second Temple and the end of the 3rd century. Jews during the 4th century provided their children with a Greek education, which would enable them to compete in the Greek world (Wilken 1983, 49).

10. Regarding Alexandria, Jews had almost vanished after the failed rebellions of the early 2nd century, but by the beginning of the 5th century (at the time of their expulsion in 415) there was a "large and influential" Jewish community there (Wilken 1971, 57). Wilken (1971, 46) notes that Christian-Jewish relations in 4th century Alexandria had deteriorated into increasing hostility well before the expulsion, and, consistent with a resource competition perspective, there is evidence that some of the Jews were wealthy traders and shipbuilders involved in the supply of grain to Rome (Wilken 1971, 49). Unlike the case with Antioch, there is no evidence of large numbers of Judaizing gentiles in Alexandria; instead there was a mob that could be incited by Cyril to expel the Jews and loot their property.

Wilken (1983, 43; see also Ruether 1974, 172) describes the Jewish community of late-4th-century Antioch (the site of Chrysostom's anti-Semitic tirades) as "large, well established, highly respected, and influential." Parkes (1934, 163) terms it "rich and powerful." In Antioch, Jews possessed large buildings and decorated them fashionably to serve as cultural centers. Excavations in nearby areas indicate that the 4th century was a period of a great flowering of Jewish material culture (Wilken 1983, 54; see also Feldman 1993, 73, 364ff). During this period Jews built "large and impressive" synagogues throughout the empire, attesting to their economic affluence and the general flourishing of Jewish culture (Wilken 1971, 37).

11. Juster also notes that Jewish artisans working in bronze and other metals specialized in making items for the luxury trade, suggesting vertical integration of the Jewish economy to include manufacture, transportation, and retailing, as occurred in later centuries in Eastern Europe (see *PTSDA*, Ch. 6).

12. Feldman (1993, 407) interprets such passages as complaints about Jewish aggressive measures intended to convert Jews; I would suggest that they are charges of predatory Jewish economic and social practices against Christians.

13. Jerome also commented that Jews often reached old age. Jewish survivorship may therefore have been high compared to gentiles during this period—as it has been whenever it has been studied on modern populations (*PTSDA*, Ch. 7).

14. Gager (1983, 7; see also deLange 1991) makes the interesting suggestion that the extant literature from the early Church was deliberately selected to emphasize anti-Semitic themes and exclude other voices, much as the priestly redaction of the Pentateuch retained from earlier writings only what was compatible with Judaism as a diaspora ideology. Conceivably, these early works were even edited or elaborated to emphasize anti-Jewish themes. Gager's suggestion is highly compatible with the present perspective that there was a qualitative shift toward the conscious construction of a fundamentally anti-Semitic version of history during this period.

15. Michael (1994) provides several highly emotional anti-Jewish statements from several 2nd- and 3rd-century Church Fathers, especially Tertullian. Tertullian's writings suggest that Christian social identity as defined by anti-Judaism was already established during this period. Tertullian "needed Jews and Judaism as a kind of antitype to define nearly everything he was and stood for. . . . He uses [anti-Judaism] rhetorically to win arguments against his opponents and he uses it theologically . . . to construct a Christianity, a Christian social identity, which is centrally, crucially, un-Jewish, anti-Jewish" (Wilken 1971, x). This suggests that Christianity as an anti-Jewish group strategy originated well before the 4th century, although it only came to power at that time. Netanyahu (1995) makes the improbable argument that anti-Judaism was central to Christianity from its beginnings in the New Testament.

16. As indicated in *PTSDA* (Ch. 8), the Church adopted the exogamous practices of the Roman empire and subsequently extended them to include an ever wider set of spiritual and blood relatives. The Church also idealized celibacy, and as a result Constantine repealed the Augustine laws that promoted marriage and fertility.

17. This interpretation of Judaism remained a staple of Christian theology in later periods. For example, during the height of papal power and influence in the 13th century, Pope Innocent III accused the Jews of following the Mosaic law, which promised earthly riches and reproductive success: "Such are the carnal Jews, who seek only what sense perceives, who delight in the corporeal senses alone" (in Synan 1965, 88). Innocent interpreted Christianity as an attempt to unite Jews and gentiles so that "the enclosures that formerly separated the pagans with their idolatries from the Hebrews with their ceremonies have now been broken down" (Synan 1965, 88).

18. St. Ambrose, who in 388 prevailed on Emperor Theodosius to rescind an order to a bishop to rebuild a synagogue destroyed by anti-Jewish actions, appears to have originated the idea that the emperor should be subservient to the Church rather than the reverse (see Ullman 1970, 13). In order to be effective in achieving its political goals, an anti-Semitic movement must control the government. This doctrine became elaborated in

later periods, with the eventual result that the Church became "the most influential and important governmental institution [of Europe] during the medieval period" (Ullman 1970, 1).